Drug Enforcement Administration
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEA and partners collect a record amount of unwanted medications during National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

DEA brings in nearly a million pounds of prescription medications

WASHINGTON – DEA's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day brought in nearly a million pounds of unused, expired, and unwanted medications across the country, the largest amount ever collected in the program's ten years. Americans once again showed their dedication to remove prescription pills from their homes to prevent addiction before it starts.

DEA, along with its law enforcement partners, has now collected nearly 13.7 million pounds of expired, unused, and unwanted prescription medications since the inception of the National Prescription Drug Take Back Initiative in 2010. On Oct. 24, the public turned in 985,392 pounds – almost 493 tons – of medication to DEA and 4,153 of its community partners at 4,587 collection sites nationwide, including 33 Bureau of Indian Affairs sites.

"This year's event, with a record-setting 493-ton collection, is a sure sign that DEA's Take Back Day events continue to provide a vital public service that keeps loved ones safe—an opportunity to rid homes of potentially dangerous unused, expired, and unwanted medications," said DEA Acting Administrator Timothy Shea. "Every day is Take Back Day and we encourage the public to continue to address this urgent safety and public health issue by using the thousands of existing drop-off locations throughout the year."

In addition to DEA's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, safe and secure drug disposal continues to be available at any of the 11,000 DEA authorized collectors throughout the year. For more information, visit: https://apps2.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch/spring/main?execution=e1s1.

Given the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, DEA wants to ensure that the public is aware of other ways they can dispose of unwanted prescription drugs without having to leave their homes. Both the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency have tips on how to safely dispose of drugs at home.

DEA also encourages the public to reach out to their local law enforcement to find out if they have any permanent drug disposal locations throughout their local community.

Complete results for DEA's 2020 October Take Back Day are available at www.deatakeback.com.

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