

National Take Back Initiative

Introduction

On September 25, 2010, DEA will coordinate a collaborative effort with state and local law enforcement agencies focused on removing potentially dangerous controlled substances from our nation's medicine cabinets. A national take-back day will provide a unified opportunity for the public to surrender expired, unwanted, or unused pharmaceutical controlled substances and other medications to law enforcement officers for destruction. This one-day effort will bring national focus to the issue of pharmaceutical controlled substance abuse. The program provides an opportunity for law enforcement, prevention, treatment, and the business community to collaborate and establish a safe collection site for all Americans, regardless of where they reside.

Collection Day Protocols

- On Saturday, September 25, 2010, state and local law enforcement agencies will host one or more collection sites at locations of their choosing. Locations should be selected that provide easy access and available parking.
- Controlled, non-controlled, and over the counter substances may be collected. The general public is often unaware of the distinction in medication status.
- Collection efforts may be combined with community drug awareness activities and involve the distribution of brochures and other information.
- This program is anonymous and all efforts should be made to protect the anonymity of individuals disposing of medications. No questions or requests for identification should be made.
- Participants may dispose of medication in its original container or by removing the medication from its container and disposing of it directly into the disposal box. If an original container is submitted, the individual should be encouraged to remove any identifying information from the prescription label.
- No effort should be made by law enforcement personnel to count, inventory, or log medications.
- All solid dosage pharmaceutical product and liquids in consumer containers may be accepted. Liquid products, such as cough syrup, should remain sealed in their original container. The depositor should ensure that the cap is tightly sealed to prevent leakage.
- Intra-venous solutions, injectibles, and syringes will not be accepted due to potential hazard posed by blood-borne pathogens.

- Illicit substances such as marijuana or methamphetamine are not a part of this initiative and should not be placed in collection containers. If an individual attempts to surrender an illicit controlled substance, law enforcement personnel should handle such material as abandoned property in accordance with department policy.
- All participants must retain possession of their own medication during the surrender process. Law enforcement personnel should not handle the medications at any time.
- A law enforcement officer must remain with the drug disposal box at all times. Collected pharmaceutical products should be handled as drug evidence with law enforcement custody to safe-guard the surrendered material.
- If you need additional collection boxes, you are authorized to use a container approved by your department as part of its standard operating procedures.
- At the conclusion of the event, a law enforcement officer will seal the drug disposal boxes in accordance with your agency's policy and procedure. It is recommended that the box be sealed with tamper-evident tape or evidence sticker. Each box should be labeled as "Miscellaneous Pharmaceuticals to be turned over to DEA."
- The drug collection boxes should then be returned to your police department and stored per your department's standard operating procedures for safe keeping and temporary storage, until they are turned over to DEA.