



Media Release

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For Immediate Release

September 23, 2014

Agencies Taking Back Unwanted Prescription Drugs September 27

Law enforcement agencies across the state will be collecting old or expired prescription drugs this Saturday as part of the 9th National Drug Take Back Event. The Take Back programs remove unused or unwanted medications from homes, where they could be stolen, accidentally ingested, abused, or become a water pollutant.

Anyone can take any medication to a drop-off location on Sept. 27 no questions asked.

Last April, Arkansans turned in more than 22,000 pounds of prescription drugs at 187 sites overseen by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and its state and local law enforcement partners. Counting all eight previous Take Back events, Arkansas has collected more than 105,000 pounds of medications, making the state fourth in the nation for pills collected per person. Arkansas also has more participating law enforcement agencies than Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama combined.

“Though we have held these events many times in Arkansas, we continue to see greater and greater turnout,” said Steve Varady, interim State Drug Director. “This shows us the people of Arkansas are ready to fight back against prescription drug abuse by keeping these medicines out of the wrong hands.”

Arkansas has one of the highest rates of prescription drug abuse in the nation. By the time Arkansas high school students have reached their senior year, 14% have abused prescription drugs, and studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from home, family and friends. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—both pose potential safety and health hazards.

To participate, bring any unwanted or unused medications to one of the dozens of participating locations across the state. Needles and sharps will not be accepted. To find the nearest take back location, visit www.artakeback.org.