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MEDIA CONTACTS: Stephany Dugan, ra-dapressoffice@pa.gov
Jack Eilber, Aging, agingcomms@pa.gov
Joseph Butera, DMVA, jbutera@pa.gov
Adam Reed, PSP, ra-pspcomm@pa.gov

Shapiro Administration, PA Office of Attorney General Encourage Participation in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day This Weekend

Since the program began 9 years ago, 1.3 million pounds of expired, unused and unwanted prescription medications have been destroyed across all 67 counties in an effort to prevent misuse.

Pennsylvanians can drop off expired, unused and unwanted prescription medications at hundreds of sites all across the Commonwealth.

Allentown, PA – Today, the **Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP)**, **Pennsylvania State Police (PSP)**, **Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA)**, and **Department of Aging (PDA)** joined officials from the **Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General** and Lehigh County to encourage Pennsylvanians to take part in the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day initiative this Saturday, April 27.

The DEA has offered National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day since 2010 with the goal of fighting prescription drug misuse by creating convenient ways to dispose of medication that could otherwise be at risk of misuse.

"Prescription Drug Take-Back Day is a convenient way to dispose of expired, unused and unwanted prescription medications in a safe manner. I encourage Pennsylvanians to clean out their medicine cabinets, find the nearest take-back box, and drop the medications off on Saturday – it's really that simple," said **DDAP Secretary Dr. Latika Davis-Jones**.

During the most recent National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day in October 2023, the DEA collected more than 30,000 pounds of unused medication in Pennsylvania alone across 262 collection sites.

In addition to the DEA's Prescription Drug Take-Back Days, the Shapiro Administration offers year-round opportunities to dispose of medication through [Pennsylvania's Prescription Drug Take-Back Program](#).

"In addition to the DEA's boxes on Saturday, there are hundreds of DDAP drug take-back boxes available throughout Pennsylvania year-round for residents to use," said **Secretary Davis-Jones**.

Since the inception of Pennsylvania's drug take-back program in 2015, more than **1.3 million pounds of prescription medication have been destroyed across the 888 take-back boxes in all 67 Pennsylvania counties**.

The PSP aims to provide a safe and convenient means of disposal year-round by collecting unwanted prescription medications at **65 stations** across the Commonwealth. No personal information is required, and drop-off boxes are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. **More than 4,400 pounds of medications were collected at PSP stations last year.**

"The Pennsylvania State Police urges the public to take advantage of our free, convenient prescription drug drop-off boxes in the lobbies of 65 of our stations," said **Colonel Christopher Paris, Pennsylvania State Police Commissioner**. "These boxes are an easy way to ensure unwanted or expired medications are properly and safely disposed of."

The DMVA's Counterdrug Joint Task Force (CJTF) is operated by the Pennsylvania National Guard (PNG) and is responsible for, along with narcotics agents from the Attorney General's office, collecting and weighing discarded prescription drugs through Pennsylvania's drug take-back program. In addition, the CJTF provides counterdrug support and training to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, community-based organizations, and educational and government organizations that request assistance at no cost to the agency supported. The PNG is part of the DMVA's dual mission, which also includes supporting Pennsylvania's more than 700,000 veterans.

"We are proud to provide this service along with training and support to local law enforcement," said **Maj. Gen. Mark Schindler, Pennsylvania's adjutant general and head of the DMVA**. "Together, we can make our communities safer and healthier for everyone."

"Nearly every family is impacted by substance use disorder — anyone is susceptible to addiction. And there are so many tragic stories that start with someone taking a legitimate prescription for necessary treatment, then spiral out of control," **Attorney General Michelle Henry** said. "Our ongoing collaborations with federal, state and local partners are vital to providing support to our communities, but individuals can take preemptive steps by participating in programs like Drug Take-Back events by removing old, unneeded or unused medications from their homes."

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 83 percent of adults 65 and older report they are currently taking prescription medicine and older adults are also more likely to be taking multiple prescription medications. This can lead to a higher rate of exposure to potentially addictive medications. The increased availability of prescription medication in the homes of older adults makes it vitally important to regularly clean out and dispose of old, unwanted, or unneeded prescription medication.

“An older adult’s prescription needs may change over time, resulting in either taking a different medication or stopping a particular one altogether. This could generate unused or unwanted prescriptions that remain in their home and potentially getting into the wrong hands, leading to misuse, developing a substance use disorder or lethal overdose,” said **Secretary of Aging Jason Kavulich**. “To protect both the older adults and the persons who may come across those prescriptions, we encourage everyone to consider the risks and to take proper action to discard those unused or unwanted medications.”

“Lehigh County Drug and Alcohol is happy to support National Drug Take Back Day because it’s a reminder that everyone can be part of the solution to the opioid epidemic,” said **Lehigh County Executive Phil Armstrong**. “Each bottle of safely disposed medications that doesn’t make it onto the street can be a life saved.”

For more information on National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, visit takebackday.dea.gov.

You can find one of Pennsylvania’s year-round drug take-back locations at ddap.pa.gov/drugtakeback.

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