



Prescription Drug Take Back Initiative Arkansas Success

- As part of the National Drug Control Strategy, the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) has called for an increase of prescription drug return and disposal programs as a means to curbing prescription drug abuse.
- In early 2010, a coalition led by the State Drug Director, the Attorney General, and both Arkansas Districts of the U.S. Attorney's Office, and including numerous federal, local, and state agencies, prevention professionals, and private organizations, launched an ongoing education program to encourage everyone to "Monitor, Secure, and Dispose" their prescription medications.
- As part of the "Monitor, Secure, and Dispose" effort, the coalition organized Arkansas's participation in the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's National Prescription Take-Back Initiative, and take back events took place on September 25, 2010, April 30, 2011, October 29, 2011, April 28, 2012, September 29, 2012, April 27, 2013, October 26, 2013, April 26, 2014, and September 27, 2014. DEA announced the discontinuation of the national initiative in September 2014, but an Arkansas take back event under the leadership of partners within the state was held on April 25, 2015. DEA then reinstated the program nationally, and the most recent event was September 26, 2015.
- Due to the commitment, dedication, and effort of the Arkansas Law Enforcement Community, its partners, and the multi-agency coalition, and due to excellent participation by Arkansans in all areas of the state, the take back events have been successful above and beyond all expectations. Collectively, the ten Arkansas prescription drug take back events have produced the return of more than **81 tons** of unneeded medication, estimated at **226 million pills**.
- Including all ten DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Initiative events:
 - Arkansas ranked #3 nationally in pounds collected per person.
 - Despite being just thirty-second in population among all states, Arkansas ranked #15 in total weight collected.
 - 54 more law enforcement agencies participated in Arkansas than the national average.
 - Arkansas's average number of collection sites for each event was 162 - the national per state average was 108 per event.
 - For the four state DEA region consisting of Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, Arkansas, despite being the least populated:
 - Accounted for over 65% of the total weight taken in for this entire region for all take back events combined.
 - Collected 76,727 pounds more than the other three states combined.
 - Accounted for over half of the region's total sites.
 - Averaged more participating law enforcement agencies than the other three states combined.
- Pills collected in take backs will never be abused, be accidentally ingested, be used in a crime, cause an overdose, cause a traffic accident, or pollute Arkansas waterways.