

Press Release: VPD to Again Participate in Drug Enforcement Administration's National "Take-Back" Prescription Drug Program

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Event: Ventura Police Department to Again Participate in Drug Enforcement Administration's National "Take-Back" Prescription Drug Program

VPD Contact: Commander Darin Schindler 805-339-4341

DEA Contact: Special Agent Sarah Pullen, 213-621-6827

City of Ventura Collection Locations:

- Ventura Police Department, 1425 Dowell Dr., Ventura, CA 93003
- Westside Resource Center, 110 N. Olive, #K, Ventura, CA 93001

Date/Time of Event: Saturday, April 26, 2014, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Officer(s) Involved: Ventura Police Officers

Narrative:

The Ventura Police Department (VPD) will once again be participating in the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) National "Take-Back" Prescription Drug Program. The nationwide event is scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 2014, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., local time. The event gives members of the public another opportunity to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous, expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. The service is free and completely anonymous, no questions asked. Two locations within the City of Ventura have been set up as collection sites. They are as follows:

- VPD Headquarters, 1425 Dowell Dr., Ventura, CA 93003
- Westside Resource Center, 110 N. Olive, #K, Ventura, CA 93001

The event was first held in September 2010 and has been held bi-annually since (events occur in April and October). The response to the event from both law enforcement agencies and communities nationwide has been overwhelming. For example at the most recent event in October of 2013, Americans turned in over 324 tons of prescription drugs (that's 647,211 pounds) at over 5,200 sites operated by the DEA and nearly 4,500 state and local law enforcement partners. In its seven previous Take Back events, the DEA and law enforcement agencies have taken in over 3.4 million pounds (1,733 tons) of medications.

Our goal for the upcoming event remains the same -- to not only prevent increased prescription pill abuse and theft, but to collect potentially dangerous, expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs for destruction. VPD staff will be on hand at both locations where individuals can simply drop off their medications with no questions asked.

Additional collection sites in every local community can be found by going to the DEA's website at www.dea.gov, clicking on the "Got Drugs?" icon, and following the links to a database where individuals can enter a zip code. The site is continuously updated with new Take-Back locations.

The Take-Back initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Many Americans are not aware that medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are increasing at alarming rates, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, many Americans do not know how to properly dispose of their unused medicine, often flushing them down the toilet or throwing them away -- both potential safety and health hazards.

Said VPD Police Chief Ken Corney, "We are pleased to once again take part in the DEA's National Take-Back Prescription Drug program. Prescription drug abuse is the Nations' fast growing drug problem and presents an ever increasing concern to not only law enforcement, but to our families and communities across our country. The Take-Back program is a great and safe way for individuals to dispose of their unwanted prescriptions and also helps draw much needed attention to the threat that prescription drug abuse poses."

Collection Day Information:

- The program is 100% anonymous. NO questions or requests for identification will be made.
- Ideally, 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 will be encouraged to remove any identifying information from the prescription label.
- Controlled, non-controlled, and over the counter substances may be collected.

- All solid dosage pharmaceutical products and liquids in consumer containers will 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.
- All participants must retain possession of their own medication during the surrender process. The participants have the option of dropping the prescription vials/containers into the collection box or emptying the prescription directly into the collection box. Law enforcement personnel should not handle the medications at any time.
- Commercial businesses are excluded from disposing of their medications in this manner. The event is for residents and community members.
- Illicit substances such as marijuana or methamphetamine are not a part of this initiative.
- A sworn law enforcement officer will remain with the drug disposal box at all times.

Additional Take-Back Program Resources and Contact Information:

VPD program contact: Commander Darin Schindler, 805-339-4341, or via e-mail at dschindler@venturapd.org

DEA Public Information Officer contact: Special Agent Sarah Pullen, 213-621-6827, or via e-mail at sarah.e.pullen@usdoj.gov

DEA website: www.dea.gov

DEA National Take-Back Program Website: www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov

DEA Public Service Announcement Website: www.nationaltakebackday.com