



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

News Release

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**MORE THAN HALF TON OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS
COLLECTED IN TAKE-BACK PROGRAM**

HONOLULU – More than half a ton of prescription drugs have been collected in two months through the Hawai`i Drug Take-Back Program.

The program encourages Hawai`i residents to turn in unused, unneeded, or expired prescription medications at collection sites across Hawai`i.

To date, a total of 1,052 pounds of drugs (not including packaging) have been collected.

This service is free and anonymous – no questions asked. The collected drugs are incinerated according to federal and state environmental guidelines.

Attorney General Mark Bennett, Narcotics Enforcement Division Administrator Keith Kamita, and U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration Special-Agent-in-Charge Robin Dinlocker launched the program on September 25, 2010.

“Unused or expired prescription drugs pose serious health and safety risks,” Bennett said. “This program gives Hawai`i residents an opportunity to help protect their families and community by disposing of unused medicine safely and anonymously. Proper disposal helps reduce the risks of accidental poisoning, prescription drug abuse, entry into human water supply, and potential harm to aquatic life.”

A list of collection dates and locations, as well as other program information, is available at <http://hawaii.gov/ag>.

The next collection will be held in Lahaina on Saturday, December 4.

Unused or expired medicine should be disposed of properly when it is no longer needed for the illness for which it was prescribed.

- Medicines may lose their effectiveness after the expiration date.
- Improper use of prescription drugs can be as dangerous as illegal drug use.

Having unused and expired medicine in your home increases the risk of prescription drug abuse.

- In 2008, 6.2 million Americans aged 12 years or older abused prescription drugs – more than the total number of Americans abusing cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, and inhalants combined.
- Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends – including from home medicine cabinets.

Having unused and expired medicine in your home increases the risk of accidental poisoning.

- Homes where children or the elderly live are especially vulnerable to this danger.
- People may mistake one type of medicine for another type. Children may mistake medicine for candy.

Unused or expired medicine should not be thrown in the trash where others can find it.

- Proper disposal helps reduce the risk of prescription drugs being used inappropriately.

Unused or expired medicine should not be flushed down the toilet unless the label says it is flushable.

- Proper disposal helps reduce the risk of prescription drugs entering a human water supply or potentially harming aquatic life.

The program is a partnership of:

- Department of the Attorney General
- Narcotics Enforcement Division, Department of Public Safety
- U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
- Hawai'i Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.)
- Hawai'i High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
- Hawai'i National Guard
- Longs Drugs
- Molokai Drugs

For more information, please visit <http://hawaii.gov/ag> or call 837-8470.

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