



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

News Release

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

DAVID M. LOUIE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
Phone: (808) 586-1500

RUSSELL A. SUZUKI
FIRST DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

For Immediate Release: October 16, 2013

News Release 2013-21

National (Prescription Drug) Take Back Initiative

HONOLULU – The Department of the Attorney General, in partnership with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and State Narcotics Enforcement Division, is coordinating the 7th National Take Back Initiative on the islands of Oahu, Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii. Anyone with expired or unused prescription medications is encouraged to bring their medications to a collection site on Saturday, October 26, 2013, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. A list of collection sites is attached or visit www.dea.gov.

This service is free and anonymous – no questions asked. Tablets, capsules, and all other solid dosage forms of medication will be accepted. New or used needles and syringes will not be accepted.

This is a great opportunity for those who have missed the previous events or who have subsequently accumulated unwanted, unused prescription drugs to safely dispose of those medications.

Since September 2010, Hawaii together with Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands has collected nearly 11,000 pounds (5.5 tons) of expired and unused prescription medications. On the most recent National Take-Back day on April 27, 2013, 742,497 pounds (371 tons) of prescription medication were turned in at the 5,829 Take-Back sites available in all 50 states and the U.S. territories. Approximately 1,330 pounds of prescription medications were collected throughout Hawaii.

Attorney General David Louie states, “I am pleased that my staff is working in partnership with the DEA and State Narcotics Enforcement Division to address the seriousness of prescription drug abuse and misuse. Nationally and locally, this is an issue of growing concern. These take back efforts provide an opportunity for the community to prevent drug abuse and theft by disposing of unwanted prescription medications.”

-More-

Robin Dinlocker, DEA Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge, adds, “a large percentage of people abusing prescription drugs obtain them from friends and relatives, often raiding the family medicine cabinet. In order to stem this trend, DEA has joined with our law enforcement and community partners to host National Prescription Drug Take Back Events. Take Back Events provide a free, anonymous, and environmentally safe opportunity for the public to turn in unused, unwanted or expired prescription medication.”

Keith Kamita, Administrator, Narcotics Enforcement Division, Department of Public Safety, goes on to say that “in Hawaii, pharmaceutical controlled substances have become a huge problem with our youth. They underestimate the dangers of these types of controlled substances stating ‘how can it hurt me? It’s prescribed by doctors.’ These substances are as strong as or stronger than street drugs. Hawaii’s participation in the Take Back Initiative helps eliminate these life-threatening hazards by safely destroying old, outdated and unwanted substances, possibly saving the life of one of our kids.”

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 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 or flushed down the toilet.

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

For more information, please visit www.dea.gov.

#

For more information, contact:
Anne Lopez
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
(808) 586-1284
anne.e.lopez@hawaii.gov
www.ag.hawaii.gov

Valerie Mariano
Chief of Community and Crime Prevention, Department of the Attorney General
(808) 586-1444
valerie.s.mariano@hawaii.gov
www.ag.hawaii.gov

US Drug Enforcement Administration – Hawaii District Office
(808) 541-1930
www.dea.gov

Toni Schwartz
Public Information Officer
The Department of Public Safety
(808) 587-1358
toni.e.schwartz@hawaii.gov
www.dps.hawaii.gov