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Alaska Drug Take-Back Program Total

(ANCHORAGE, Alaska) – Just under 1,900 pounds of prescription medication was collected in Alaska during the third Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) National Prescription Drug Take Back event in October 2011. Nationwide (188.5 tons) of drugs came out of homes and turned over for proper destruction. Last Take Back Day April 2011. Alaskans turned over 1,603.6 pounds of prescription drugs.

Until a safe disposal process for prescription medications is established nationwide, the DEA will continue to partner with agencies like the Alaska State Troopers to hold Take Back Days every six months. The Alaska State Troopers would like to thank the DEA along with the Alaska National Guard Counterdrug Support Program, the U.S. Department of Justice, Anchorage PD, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Veterans Affairs Police, Juneau PD, Sitka PD, Petersburg PD, Valdez PD, North Pole PD, Craig PD, Skagway PD, Soldotna PD, Kenai PD, Hoonah PD, Seward PD and the Mayor of Juneau for their efforts. Also, a special thanks to Fred Meyer and to all the volunteers from across the state that stepped up to assist with collecting medications. The event wouldn't have been possible or successful without the enormous effort put out by the volunteers and private agencies.

More than seven million Americans abuse prescription drugs, according to the 2009 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Each day approximately 2,500 teens use prescription drugs to get high for the first time according to the Partnership for a Drug Free America. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including the home medicine cabinet.

Four days after DEA's first Take-Back Day event September 25, 2010, Congress passed legislation amending the Controlled Substances Act to allow the DEA to develop a permanent process for people to safely and conveniently dispose of their prescription drugs. After President Obama signed the Safe and Secure Drug Disposal Act of 2010 on October 12, DEA immediately began developing regulations for a more permanent solution.

In all, there were 34 locations in 27 communities around Alaska who participated in the event during October 2011. Communities participating in the event were Anchorage, Aniak, Bethel, Dillingham, Emmonak, Fairbanks, Girdwood, Glennallen, Hoonah, Juneau, Ketchikan, Klawock, Kodiak, Kotzebue, McGrath, Nome, North Pole, Palmer, Petersburg, Seward, Skagway, Sitka, Soldotna, St. Mary's, Talkeetna, Valdez and Wasilla.

To view the DEA's national release on the Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, go to <http://www.justice.gov/dea/pubs/pressrel/pr110311.html>