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Alaskans Turn In 3,931 Pounds During Recent National Prescription Take Back Day

(ANCHORAGE, Alaska) – Alaskans turned in 3,931 pounds of prescription medication during the sixth Drug Enforcement Administration National Prescription Drug Take Back event on April 27.

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 Police Department, Fort Wainwright, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Juneau PD, Wasilla PD, Palmer PD, Valdez PD, North Pole PD, Soldotna PD, Kenai PD and Seward PD for their efforts. The event wouldn't have been possible or successful without the enormous effort put out by the volunteers and private agencies.

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high – more Americans currently abuse prescription drugs than the number of those using cocaine, hallucinogens, and heroin combined, according to the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet.

In all, there were 31 Take Back locations in 25 communities around Alaska that participated in the event in April: Anchorage, Aniak, Bethel, Dillingham, Eagle River, Emmonak, Fairbanks, Fort Wainwright, Glennallen, Juneau, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Ketchikan, Klawock, Kodiak, Kotzebue, McGrath, Nome, North Pole, Palmer, St. Mary's, Seward, Sitka, Soldotna, Talkeetna and Wasilla.

For a list of amount of prescription drugs turned in throughout the different Alaska communities, go to <http://www.dps.state.ak.us/PIO/releases/resources/Press%20Release%20Information/>. To view the DEA's national release on the Prescription Drug Take Back Day, go to <http://www.justice.gov/dea/divisions/hq/2013/hq050213.shtml>.

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