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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Drug Take Back Day is April 25

*Drug Take Back Day, Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Help
Prevent Prescription Drugs from Getting into Wrong Hands*

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) is announcing that this upcoming Saturday, April 25, 2026, is National Drug Take Back Day.

During the first three months of this year, more than 2.1 million monitored prescription drugs were dispensed in Wisconsin, [according to data](#) provided by the Wisconsin Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (ePDMP) run by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS). Ahead of April 25, DOJ and DSPS are spreading awareness about the amount of prescription drugs dispensed in our state, how those drugs are monitored, and how Wisconsinites can help reduce the likelihood of prescription drug misuse by disposing of unwanted and unused medications at a Drug Take Back Day event on Saturday.

“Drug Take Back Day is about prevention,” said Attorney General Josh Kaul. “Please help with the fight against addiction by disposing of your unused and unwanted medications at a Drug Take Back event this Saturday or at a permanent drug drop box.”

The ePDMP launched in 2017 and is a tool to help combat the ongoing prescription drug abuse epidemic in Wisconsin. By providing valuable information about monitored prescription drugs that are dispensed in the state, it aids healthcare professionals in their prescribing and dispensing decisions. Monitored prescription drugs are defined as controlled substances in Schedules II-V or drugs identified by

the Board as having a substantial potential for abuse. The ePDMP also fosters the ability of pharmacies, healthcare professionals, law enforcement agencies, and public health officials to work together to reduce the misuse, abuse, and diversion of monitored prescription drugs.

More than 8.5 million monitored prescription drugs were dispensed in Wisconsin in 2025, according to ePDMP data. That number is roughly comparable to the data for the past four years of monitored prescription drugs dispensed in the state. However, the annual opioid dispensing saw an 18% decrease in the past four years and a 39.5% decrease since 2017 when ePDMP was launched.

Law enforcement is required to submit reports to ePDMP when an officer suspects that a person violated the Controlled Substances Act with a prescription drug (such as diversion or unlawful possession), when the person is suspected of having experienced a fatal or non-fatal opioid-related overdose, or when the person reports to the agency that his or her controlled substance prescription has been stolen. There were 965 total law enforcement alerts to ePDMP in 2025.

“The ePDMP has been a major success in reducing the dispensing of opioids in Wisconsin and is a great tool for helping raise awareness of prescription drug dispensing amounts,” said DSPS Secretary Dan Hereth. “We’re proud to join our partners at DOJ and DHS to promote the benefits of the ePDMP and Drug Take Back Day in improving safety in Wisconsin communities.”

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services recently announced that Wisconsin saw a historic 42.5% decline in opioid overdose deaths from 2023 to 2024, dropping from 1,422 to 818 deaths. While this progress is significant, the opioid epidemic continues to claim lives and devastate families and communities across the state. Safe disposal of unused or expired prescription opioids is one tool that may help reduce the risk of misuse.

“Removing unneeded or unused prescriptions from the home is a simple yet powerful step we can all take to keep our families, friends, and communities safer and healthier,” said Wisconsin Department of Health Services Director of Substance Use Initiatives Michelle Haese. “We are humbled and pleased by the decrease in opioid overdose deaths, and we know it’s only possible through the efforts of Wisconsinites across our state and events like Drug Take Back Days.”

More than 165 Drug Take Back events with more than 265 participating law enforcement agencies are planned across Wisconsin on Saturday, where Wisconsinites are encouraged to dispose of unwanted and unused medications.

To find a Drug Take Back location near you, go to: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/opioids/drug-take-back-day.htm>.

Unused or expired medicine should never be flushed or poured down the drain. Water reclamation facilities are not designed to remove all pharmaceuticals, and trace amounts are showing up in rivers and lakes.

To ensure the success of Drug Take Back Day, Wisconsin DOJ relies on assistance from the DEA, and the generous support of Fuchs Trucking, Reworld, the Wisconsin State Patrol, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs, the Indiana State Police, Waukesha County, Waukesha County Sheriff's Office, and all participating local law enforcement agencies.

GUIDELINES:

All waste pharmaceuticals must be generated by a household – no businesses are allowed.

Bring: Prescription (controlled and non-controlled) and over-the-counter medications, ointments, patches, inhalers, non-aerosol sprays, creams, vials and pet medications. Vape pens or other e-cigarette devices (batteries removed).

Do Not Bring: Illegal drugs, needles/sharps, acids, aerosol cans, bio-hazardous materials (anything containing a bodily fluid or blood), personal care products (shampoo, soaps, lotions, sunscreens), household hazardous waste (paint, pesticides, oil, gas), mercury thermometers.

Participants may dispose of solid, non-liquid medication(s) by removing the label or blacking out personal information on the label of the plastic pill container or by putting the medication into a clear sealable plastic bag. Blister packages without the medications being removed are also acceptable.

Liquids will be accepted during this initiative. However, the liquids, creams and sprays must be in their original packaging. Liquids without the original packaging will not be accepted.

Illicit substances such as marijuana or methamphetamine are not a part of this initiative and should not be placed in collection containers.