



COSSAP Drug Disposal Grantees Collect More Than 57,000 Pounds of Medication on National Take Back Day

Catching Up With COSSAP, December 2022

The nine grantees of COSSAP's Comprehensive Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Program collected and disposed of 57,438 pounds of medication on National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, October 29, 2022, leveraging partnerships between law enforcement agencies and their communities to take millions of pills out of American homes so that they cannot be diverted for harmful purposes.

The COSSAP grantees' collective haul represented a sizeable portion—almost 9 percent—of the 647,163 pounds of medication collected nationwide, [as reported](#) by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), which oversees Take Back Day activities. One COSSAP grantee, the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ), accounted for approximately 56,000 pounds of the nationwide total, involving 270 law enforcement agencies across Wisconsin in more than 140 drug take-back events. Among all states, Wisconsin reported the greatest number of law enforcement agencies involved in Take Back Day activities, the most collection sites, and the most medication collected.



Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Control Chief Agent Beau Ratke, right, staffs a collection site in Oklahoma City on Take Back Day.

'Drug Take Back Day is every day': Officials urge community to safely dispose of prescription drugs

By: [CBS 58 Newsroom](#)

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Danielle Long, opiate initiatives advisor for the Wisconsin Department of Justice, speaks to reporters at a collection site in Waukesha, Wisconsin, on National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, October 29, 2022.

"I've seen oxycodone. I've seen lots of different things today. I've seen entire boxes of fentanyl patches," said Danielle Long, opiate initiatives advisor for Wisconsin DOJ, during a [visit](#) to a collection site in Waukesha with Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul. "So, we definitely know when we open those, we are seeing real medications that we're really pleased have been turned over for disposal."

"We want people to understand that Drug Take Back Day is every day," Ms. Long [added](#).

Another COSSAP grantee, the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Control (OBNDCC), also reported impressive results: 630 pounds of medication collected from Tulsa locations, 138 pounds from Oklahoma City, 331 pounds from the western part of the state, and 19 pounds from the southeast, for a statewide total of 1,118 pounds.

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As Samantha Zahm, project director for COSSAP grantee City of York, Pennsylvania, Bureau of Health, said in a local television news [interview](#), “By having safe storage and safe disposal, it’s getting it so people like youth or other types of people can’t get their hands on that medication and abuse it.”

The new grantees represent the second round of funding for the drug disposal program, which aligns state and local efforts to dispose of drugs with the DEA’s Take Back Day activities by enabling sites to purchase drug disposal and collection equipment—primarily disposal pouches and drop boxes—so they can safely dispose of both prescription medications and controlled substances.

By enlisting local partners such as law enforcement agencies, first responders, service providers, and pharmacies in their efforts, the COSSAP drug disposal sites have worked diligently to ensure maximum community buy-in and sustainability. The projects feature leadership groups comprising public safety and public health partners dedicated to making safe drug storage and disposal a high public priority, as well as public education campaigns designed to raise community awareness of their efforts.

Wisconsin DOJ’s [Dose of Reality](#) toolkit, in particular, serves as a useful model for jurisdictions across the state wishing to begin a take-back program. It offers sample email messages, print advertisements, social media posts, flyers and posters, draft opinion pieces, and even sample radio and television commercials, many of which can be customized with local information and are available in multiple languages.

The 2022 COSSAP drug disposal program grantees, selected by the Bureau of Justice Assistance in July after a competitive application process, are:

- City of Fayetteville (Georgia) Police Department
- City of York (Pennsylvania) Bureau of Health
- Cook County (Illinois) Sheriff’s Office
- Dutchess County (New York) Council on Addiction Prevention and Education
- Hamilton County (Ohio) Public Health
- Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Control
- South Health District (Georgia)
- St. Joseph County (Indiana) Department of Health
- Wisconsin Department of Justice

Two sites, Oklahoma’s OBNDCC and Wisconsin DOJ, are return grantees from 2021.



Law enforcement officers from the Town of Fishkill, New York, participate in Take Back Day activities in support of COSSAP grantee Dutchess County Council on Addiction Prevention and Education.