

NEWS RELEASE



AMISTADES, INC. TAKING BACK UNWANTED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS SATURDAY, APRIL 27, AT SUPER TARGET

TUCSON, AZ – On April 27 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Amistades, Inc. (Amistades), in conjunction with the Pima County Sheriff's Office and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will give the public its sixth opportunity in three years to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. Bring your medications for disposal to Super Target at 4040 N. Oracle Rd. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked.

Last September, Americans turned in 244 tons of prescription drugs at over 5,200 sites operated by the DEA and its thousands of state and local law enforcement partners. In its five previous Take Back events, DEA and its partners took in over 2 million pounds—over a thousand tons—of pills.

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, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. “According to the Pima County Medical Examiners Office, prescription drug abuse is on the rise,” stated Ricardo Jasso, CEO of Amistades. “In 2012, there were 37 more deaths due to drug related overdoses as compared to 2011 in Pima County.” Drug Take-Back Day is a major step to prevent teens from getting their hands on medications that can hurt them.

Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—both pose potential safety and health hazards.

Four days after the first event, Congress passed the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010, which amends the Controlled Substances Act to allow an “ultimate user” of controlled substance medications to dispose of them by delivering them to entities authorized by the Attorney General to accept them. The Act also allows the Attorney General to authorize long term care facilities to dispose of their residents’ controlled substances in certain instances. DEA is drafting regulations to implement the Act. Until new regulations are in place, local law enforcement agencies like Amistades, Inc. and the DEA will continue to hold prescription drug take-back events every few months. “At Target, we maintain a long-standing commitment to the local communities we serve. As part of this commitment, Target has developed innovative programs and technology to help support the safety and security of neighborhoods where our guests and team members live and work,” stated the Target Community Relations Department.

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