

Prescription drug take back has largest return yet

Over 40 pounds collected by law enforcement

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In conjunction with groups like the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, Johnson County law enforcement officers collected over 40 pounds of prescription drugs during last month's "take back" event.

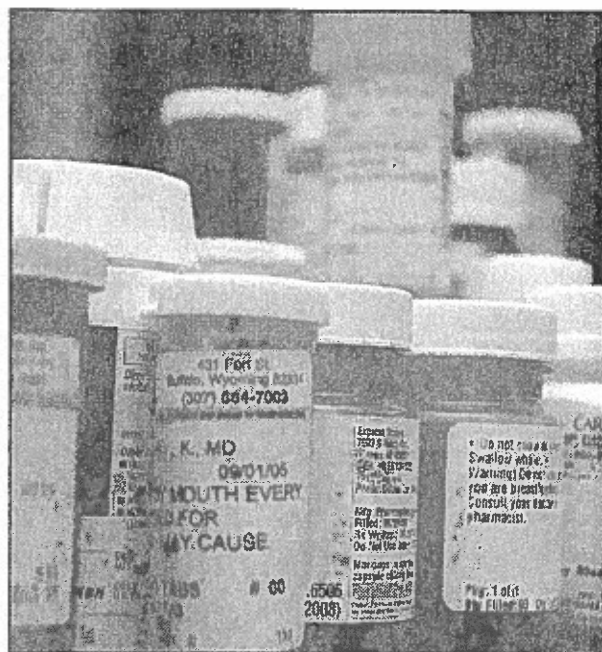
The event aimed to encourage members of the community with excess prescription medications to dispose of them in a safe and secure manner by dropping them off at the event. Medication of every sort and variety were dropped into a large container and will be taken to Cheyenne for incineration.

"We collected more drugs than the previous two events put together," said Johnson County Sheriff's Deputy Kelly Waugh. "I think part of that was because this event was part of a national event, so we had a little more advertising than before."

The national event, sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Division of Criminal Investigation, brought in 121 tons of unused medicine nationwide.

"The nature of prevention is to reduce harm and risk and I think that programs like this one really are a big part of that," said Johnson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator Bill Hawley. "The program reduces the chance of these drugs getting back into the wrong hands in the community."

"It was great to get that many drugs but they are still out there in the community and we are hopefully going to keep doing programs like this to collect as many of them as we can," said Waugh. "Studies are showing that use of leftover prescription drugs has become more



Bulletin photo by Josh Rhoten

Nearly 40 pounds of prescription drugs were collected during the take back event at the end of September.

of a problem than elicit drug use recently, so it is great to get those drugs off the street."

Previous take back events were held at the senior center, though there are currently no plans to do another event, according to Waugh.

"We had a great response from people in the community and we actually had a lot of people tell us they had more at home or would like to bring more later," said Waugh.