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SECOND ARKANSAS PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK EFFORT NETS OVER 3 ½ TONS OF RETURNED MEDICATIONS

Jefferson County, Arkansas– On Saturday, April 30, 2011, the Tri-County Drug Task Force and other Arkansas law enforcement agencies collected more than 3.5 tons of unwanted and expired prescription medications as part of the second National Prescription Take Back Initiative sponsored by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Saturday's collection totals surpassed the previous statewide take back event by more than 2000 lbs. The Arkansas State Crime Laboratory estimates the 7423 lbs. of medications translates to roughly 10.3 million pills.

On Monday, May 2nd, the Arkansas National Guard's Counterdrug Program and DEA transported the medications to Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc. in El Dorado. The destruction process was completed on May 3rd.

"Thank you to the citizens of Jefferson County and Pine Bluff, AR that visited the collection sites on Saturday, April 30, 2011 and dropped off their unused prescription medication. Prescription drugs are the second most commonly abused category of drugs, behind marijuana and ahead of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and other drugs. The National Institutes of Health estimates that nearly 20 percent of people in the United States have used prescription drugs for non-medical reasons. Initiatives such as the National Prescription Drug Take Back is what ensures that the abuse of prescription medications is reduced. It also ensures that the prescription medications don't end up in the hands of our youth. However, the ultimate goal is to eliminate such abuse through the continued vigorous pursuit of individuals who violate the laws governing prescription medications."

Through two statewide take back events, Arkansas has collected close to 6.5 tons of medications.

Arkansas's participation was planned and coordinated by the DEA Little Rock Field Office, the Office of the Drug Director, Attorney General Dustin McDaniel's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Arkansas National Guard, and more than thirty government agencies, community organizations, and public health agencies.