

Dept. of Military Affairs: Wisconsin Guard Counterdrug Program lends a helping hand as Wisconsin once again tops the nation in annual drug takeback initiative

Posted on Wednesday, Nov 3, 2021

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

WAUKESHA, Wis. – The Wisconsin National Guard lent a helping hand in the 20th annual Drug Take Back initiative as the state netted more unwanted prescription and non-prescription medications than any other in the nation.

Members of the Wisconsin National Guard's Counterdrug Program helped facilitate take back efforts in communities across Wisconsin Oct. 23 and then helped drug and law enforcement agencies consolidate the medications in Waukesha Oct. 25 to prepare them for proper disposal.

"This October Wisconsin recovered an estimated 58,000 pounds of prescription drugs, which combined with the 59,000 recovered in April comes to almost 120,000 pounds for the year," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Ruland, with the Guard's Counterdrug Program. "The overwhelming success of Drug Take Back day in Wisconsin is due to the outstanding collaboration between all of the groups involved. The Alliance for Wisconsin Youth and its community coalitions do a great job with messaging and staffing the Take Back locations along with our state's law enforcement members that are dedicated to this prevention effort."

Ruland said the semi-annual event, run jointly by the Wisconsin Department of Justice and the Drug Enforcement Agency, has great community participation with hundreds of law enforcement agencies participating in the effort. The program's

importance cannot be overstated, Ruland said.

“Our citizens know that one person’s unused prescription drugs can easily become another person’s misused prescription drugs, which can lead down the path to addiction. The Wisconsin National Guard Counterdrug Program will continue to fully support this effort in any way we can.”

Drug Take Back Day is held twice annually across Wisconsin – once in the fall and once in the spring. The program aims to get unwanted or unused prescription and non-prescription medications off medicine cabinet shelves and properly disposed to ensure they do not fall into the wrong hands or make their way into municipal water supplies. In many cases, these medications become a gateway to addiction and drug abuse.

In 2020, Wisconsin also led the way by collecting a combined 89,982 pounds – or 9 percent of the nation’s total.

Agencies from the local, state, and federal level all participate in the annual Drug Take Back Day. Each year, it collects hundreds of tons of drugs that may have otherwise ended up on the streets, or in municipal water supplies after people unknowingly disposed of their old prescriptions improperly.

Nationwide more than 4,100 law enforcement and military personnel participated in Drug Take Back Day events this year.