



AG ANNOUNCES MAJOR ADVANCES IN ALABAMA FOR SAFE DISPOSAL OF POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS MEDICINES

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Strange said Alabama is benefitting from major advances in the safe disposal of prescription medicines, with records set during recent Prescription Drug Take-Back events and with a new law that will make it easier for people to deliver unused, expired and unwanted medicines for proper disposition.

Attorney General Strange has been active in strengthening and expanding Alabama’s participation in Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, a program sponsored by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency to combat the abuse or misuse of potentially dangerous drugs that have expired or are no longer needed for those whom these controlled substances were prescribed.

On April 27, Alabama participated in the sixth National Prescription Drug Take-Back, with events having been held throughout the state in fall and spring for the past three years. The results this spring were impressive resulting in the state’s most successful Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. Initial reports estimated that about 5,906 pounds of medications were collected and safely disposed of at approximately 86 collection sites.

“I am encouraged and proud of Alabama’s continued support for this valuable program,” said Attorney General Strange. “This is a tremendous result that far exceeds any of our previous Take-Back events, with almost as much collected this April as in two separate Take-Back events in 2012.” The largest previous one-day event in Alabama was in October of 2012, with 3,057 pounds of medicines collected.

On Prescription Drug Take-Back Days, law enforcement agencies and interested community partners such as pharmacies, schools and civic groups work together to provide as many local collection sites as possible throughout the state where citizens can safely dispose of prescription medications. Each site is supervised by a law enforcement officer due to the involvement of controlled substances. Attorney General Strange commended the agencies that make this possible, and cited new collection sites this year in Blount, Lee and Winston counties and the cities of Arab, Citronelle, Heflin and Tarrant.

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House Bill 237, sponsored by Rep. Elaine Beech, received final approval from the Legislature earlier this month, and was signed into law last week by the Governor. Beginning in August, pharmacies will be allowed to accept any unused or expired prescription medications solely for purposes of destroying them. The Alabama Board of Pharmacy will be responsible for making rules for the proper administration of this process.

Attorney General Strange applauded the legislature and the Governor for putting into place laws, such as this, which further protect Alabama citizens. "This law further expands the opportunity for people to safely dispose of unused, expired and unwanted medicines at times and places that are convenient and accessible," said Attorney General Strange. "Already, the overwhelming participation in Prescription Drug Take-Back Days has taken potentially dangerous drugs out of people's homes, where they could be stolen by burglars or misused by children. Once this law is implemented, Alabamians will be able to take in their old medicines to any pharmacy with an active and open Take-Back program. This will enhance the strides we have already made to make our state safer for the people of Alabama."