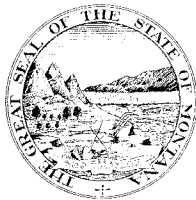


# ATTORNEY GENERAL

## STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock  
Attorney General



Department of Justice  
215 North Sanders  
PO Box 201401  
Helena, MT 59620-1401

September 23, 2011

To: Montana Law Enforcement Agencies

On October 29, 2011, the Drug Enforcement Administration will hold the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Take Back Initiative. The goal of the Initiative is to prevent prescription drug abuse by collecting and disposing of unwanted medications. Nationwide, over 309 tons of pharmaceuticals were collected during the first two events in September 2010 and April 2011, including nearly 3,000 pounds in Montana.

Thanks to those of you who have participated in these events or held independent take back events over the past several years – your efforts are already changing the dynamic of this epidemic. The Partnership for a Drug-Free America Attitude Tracking Study (PATS) has shown a decline in the perceived availability of prescription drugs. In 2010, 47 percent of teens thought prescription drugs were “easy to get” from their parents’ medicine cabinet, down from 63 percent in 2009.

While availability is down, the 2011 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that more than 18 percent of teens reported abusing prescription drugs like OxyContin, Vicodin or Ritalin. By the time they reach 12th grade, 23 percent of our kids have abused these drugs.

But we still have more work to do. We need to continue to raise awareness, monitor controlled substance prescriptions, crack down on drug-related crimes, and hold take back events. **I hope that you will consider participating in the National Take Back Initiative to give your communities an opportunity to dispose of their unwanted medications. You can sign up by visiting [www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov).**

While these stand-alone events have been successful, more communities are looking toward permanent options for drug disposal. We anticipate that regulations for implementing the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act, which became law last October, will be in place late next year. **In the meantime, my office has grants of up to \$1000 available for law enforcement agencies that wish to set up a permanent prescription drug disposal site. Please contact Siri Smillie at [ssmillie@mt.gov](mailto:ssmillie@mt.gov) or 406-444-5858 for more information or an application.**

I appreciate your commitment to curbing prescription drug abuse in Montana. It will take all of our combined efforts to make a difference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Bullock", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

STEVE BULLOCK  
Attorney General

SB:sj

c: Mr. Joseph T. Rannazzisi, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control  
Mr. Joe Kirkland, RAC Billings