

NEWS RELEASE

The Athens Police Department is partnering with OhioHealth O’Bleness Hospital in Taking back unwanted prescription drugs Saturday, October 22nd at OhioHealth O’Bleness Hospital 55 Hospital Drive, Athens, Ohio

ATHENS, OHIO – On Saturday, October 22, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the Athens Police Department along with OhioHealth O’Bleness Hospital and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will give the public its 12th opportunity in six years to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. Bring your pills for disposal to OhioHealth O’Bleness Hospital at 55 Hospital Drive (front entrance) Athens, Ohio. (The DEA cannot accept liquids or needles or sharps, only pills or patches.) The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked.

Last April, Americans turned in 447 tons (over 893,000 pounds) of prescription drugs at almost 5,400 sites operated by the DEA and more than 4,200 of its state and local law enforcement partners. Overall, in its 11 previous Take Back events, DEA and its partners have taken in over 6.4 million pounds—about 3,200 tons—of pills.

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—both pose potential safety and health hazards.

For more information about the disposal of prescription drugs or about the October 22 Take Back Day event, go to the [DEA Diversion website](#) or contact Dave Williams at dwilliams@ci.athens.oh.us or Tara Gilts at tara.gilts@ohiohealth.com.

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