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For Immediate Release

Contact: [Steve Walker](tel:6195313890) (619) 531-3890
[Tanya Sierra](tel:6195313315) (619) 531-3315
En Español [Barbara Medina](tel:6195313305) (619) 531-3305

DA Summer Stephan Highlights Rx Drug ‘Take Back’ Day this Weekend

New Study Shows Public is Using Rx Drug Drop Off Locations

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) today highlighted her office’s efforts to prevent prescription drug abuse and stop the opiate epidemic by promoting the safe disposal of unused prescription medications. Take Back Day is on Saturday, April 28 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Dropping off unused prescription drugs is anonymous and no questions are asked. The public can visit www.DEATakeBack.com for locations.

More San Diegans than ever are dying of accidental overdoses or substance abuse intoxication from opiates. Deaths due to unintentional combinations of drugs have roughly doubled in the last 15 years. Currently, there are about 250 prescription drug-related deaths a year in San Diego County.

“Having personally talked with grieving parents who have lost children to the opiate epidemic, I know the toll it’s taking on families in our community, so finding solutions to prescription drug abuse is a priority for my office,” District Attorney Summer Stephan said. “Properly disposing unused medication and preventing addictive pills from ending up in the hands of children or adults is an important step in this fight.”

The District Attorney’s Office is a member of the [San Diego County Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force](#), which works to find solutions to prevent and reduce prescription drug abuse in San Diego County. Today, the Task Force released the findings of the 2018 Prescription Drug “Safe Disposal Survey,” which aims to increase awareness and action to prevent prescription drug abuse and deaths.

The results show that six out of ten respondents have used proper disposal methods by attending “take back” days or using permanent prescription drug drop boxes provided by law enforcement, pharmacies and hospitals. However, those proper disposal practices are not consistent. The numbers also revealed that there is still a lot of work to be done; 45 percent of the survey respondents said they had either flushed unused meds down the toilet or sink, or simply threw

them in the trash. Additionally, 30 percent reported holding on to prescription medications long past their intended use or expiration dates.

The DA's Office works closely with the Task Force by not only participating in the Take Back programs, and also conducts outreach to schools to raise awareness among students about the dangers of prescription drug abuse.

The DA's Office also works closely with the County Health and Human Services Agency and collaborative courts to facilitate drug offenders getting the appropriate treatment that they need to solve the root issue and become a productive member of society. Some examples of the collaborative courts include [Drug Court](#), [Behavioral Health Court](#), [Homeless Court](#) and [Veterans Court](#).

The District Attorney's Office also prosecutes individuals who sell prescription drugs illegally. Illegal drug sales and illicit manufacturing of fake prescription drugs, especially those mixed with fentanyl can be deadly.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue justice and support victims daily across San Diego County. DA Summer Stephan has devoted her life to protecting children and families and providing justice to the voiceless and most vulnerable. She is a national leader in the fight against sexual exploitation and human trafficking, and has served as a Deputy District Attorney in San Diego County for 28 years.