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PRESS RELEASE

Edwardsville—State's Attorney Tom Gibbons is pleased to announce that sites in Madison County collected over 1,400 pounds of prescription and over-the-counter medications as part of the National Take-Back Initiative sponsored by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) that occurred on Saturday, April 28, 2012.

Residents were encouraged to bring their expired, or unwanted, prescription or over-the-counter medications to drop-off locations throughout the county. There were six locations in Madison County, including one held at the County Administration Building in Edwardsville. The site, sponsored by Gibbons, Coroner Steve Nonn and Sheriff Bob Hertz, collected 160 pounds of medications. Other sites in the county were sponsored by Glen Carbon, Madison, Maryville, Collinsville and Alton Police Departments. Collectively, the sites took in 1,427 pounds. Madison County, along with the other participating groups in the DEA's Southern Judicial District Region took in 4,424 pounds which more than doubled its totals from last October when 2,063 pounds of pills were collected.

"The huge amount of prescription pills is proof that this program is needed. I would like to thank our partners in this effort along with the citizens who participated. Efforts like these will save lives and help keep young people from heading down the path to drug addiction," Gibbons stated. "I will be working with our partners to expand this vital service to communities across Madison County."

Gibbons, who was present in Edwardsville, gave out free prescription lock boxes, paid for by Drug Asset Forfeiture Funds, to the first 20 individuals who brought their medications to the site. Gibbons recently joined the national campaign known as **Lock Your Meds** which encourages adults to closely monitor prescription and over-the-counter medications to keep them out of the hands of teens and young adults. The DEA estimates that more than seven million Americans abuse prescription drugs. Of those abusers over the age of 12, it is estimated that 70% obtain the drugs from friends and family members.

Nationwide, the DEA took in 552,161 pounds (276 tons) at 5,659 take-back sites that were located in all 50 states and U.S. territories. This was the 4th Take Back Day sponsored by the DEA and with this year's totals, the collection sites have taken over 1.5 million pounds (774 tons) of medications out of circulation.

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.

Police departments in Collinsville, Alton, Maryville and Troy offer permanent drop off locations year-round. The State's Attorney's Office has Home Inventory cards available for download at <http://www.madco-sa.org/lock-your-meds.html>.

For further information on the DEA's National Take-Back Initiative, please visit their website at http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/takeback_042812.html.

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