



Elmore Medical Center

Center for Community Health

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Med Take Back Event A Success

MOUNTAIN HOME, ID (May 10, 2010) A steady flow of cars came through the parking lot at Trinity Mountain Medical Clinic on Saturday, May 8, to safely dispose of expired or unwanted prescriptions and over-the-counter medications during the first RX/OTC Med Take Back event held in Mountain Home.

Elmore Medical Center's Center for Community Health substance abuse sub-committee worked with volunteers from the Mountain Home Police Department, Elmore County Sheriff's Office, Mountain Home Air Force Base OSI, 366th Fighter Wing Drug Reduction Program, Central District Health Department, Elmore County Commissioners and Elmore Medical Center staff to organize the drug take back event.

The medications were combined in buckets with a total weight of 91.2 lbs (excludes weight of container) collected in tablets/pills. The total included 11.8 lbs of narcotics. A total of 18.6 lbs (including weight of container) of sharps were collected. Liquid medications were combined with cat litter, filling three bags that were not weighed. No large medical equipment, household hazardous waste or other non-medical waste will be accepted.

The oldest identifiable item received during the event was bee sting medication dated 1970. Other old items with 1970's and 1980's dates were received.

Many people had large bags of items and commented that they had collected items from family members and neighbors. A couple who were helping with the Post Office food drive had an elderly resident ask them to deliver her items to the Drug Take Back event for her, which they did.

"We had a steady stream of people throughout the day, we counted more than 90 cars." stated event coordinator, Keri Meis. "We had 24 volunteers, representing 8 organizations helping to collect and sort the medications. This event would not have been possible without the great cooperation we had from the community".

The medications were sealed in large buckets by law enforcement representatives and Elmore County Sheriff's Office will transport the drugs to an incinerator located in Salt Lake City.

Prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse is rapidly increasing nationwide, especially in adolescents. A survey of teenagers by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America found that 1 in 5 teens has tried Vicodin, 1 in 10 has tried OxyContin, and 1 in 10 has used the stimulants Ritalin or Adderall for nonmedical purposes and 1 in 11 teens admitted to getting high on cough medicine. It is important for families to monitor the medications they keep in their home and make sure they are being used appropriately.

In addition to the dangers of drug abuse, inappropriate disposal of medications (i.e. flushing them down the toilet) introduces harmful contaminants into wastewater treatment systems that were not designed to remove them. As a result, trace amounts of these contaminants are released into waterways or seep into ground water.

For more information, please contact Center for Community Health at 587-8401 ext. 261



Top Photo: Laytrelda Schultz, Elmore County Sheriff's Dept collects medications from Lisa Harvel, Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce President.

Middle Photo: Sorting Medications

Bottom Photo: View of bucket of drugs before it is sealed