

## **[Beckley leads state in drug take back \(http://www.register-herald.com/todaysfrontpage/x277109479/Beckley-leads-state-in-drug-take-back\)](http://www.register-herald.com/todaysfrontpage/x277109479/Beckley-leads-state-in-drug-take-back)**

**By Mannix Porterfield**

**[Register-Herald Reporter \(http://www.register-herald.com\)](http://www.register-herald.com)**

Beckley topped the city charts in last weekend's "Drug Take Back Day" across West Virginia, netting 171 pounds of unused and unwanted medications, outstripping the larger municipalities of both Huntington and Charleston.

Overall, the largest county turn-in occurred in Wood — a whopping 350 pounds.

Sponsored by the federal Drug Enforcement Agency, the event Saturday was the second of its kind, allowing citizens to turn in old medications for proper disposal to avoid environmental harm and the risk of leaving them around a home as a temptation to thieves.

Beckley Police Chief Tim Deems considered it "great" that citizens of his city responded with such huge numbers.

The amount collected tied State Police detachments in South Charleston, which also recovered 171 pounds of prescription drugs.

"It just shows there's a need in this area, I think, for a place for people to dispose of their medications," Deems said.

His officers ran two collection points — one at the East Beckley Precinct, the other at the office of the Raleigh County Commission on Aging.

"It wasn't like you had what I could call drug addicts turning in medications," Deems said.

"These were responsible people who were disposing of their medications."

Word began to spread Tuesday that yet a third such "Drug Take Back Day" might be in the offing in early fall, but nothing was confirmed immediately.

"There's certainly a need for it," the Beckley chief said.

"We would participate in it again if they would decide to do it. I haven't seen anything official but did hear they were wanting to do it twice a year."

Charleston police boxed up 148 pounds for the DEA to handle, while residents of Huntington turned in 62

pounds, and police in Bluefield dealt with 12 pounds.

In this region, according to figures released by U.S. Attorney R. Booth Goodwin II, 16 pounds were taken by Boone County authorities, 10 pounds were turned in by Clay County residents, another 20 pounds were reported by Fayette County officials, 23.5 pounds were collected in Greenbrier County, 30.5 pounds came from Mingo County, 58 in McDowell, 12 in Monroe County and 37.5 in Nicholas County.

Combined, the statewide effort netted authorities 3,178 pounds.

Goodwin said the southern half of West Virginia witnessed 1,824 pounds, surpassing last September's total of 1,199 pounds.

"Last week's 'Take-Back' proves yet again that West Virginians want to be part of the solution to the prescription drug crisis," the U.S. attorney said.

"Citizens from around this district have embraced our efforts to rid medicine cabinets of unwanted and unused prescription drugs. Taking old prescriptions out of homes eliminates one major avenue through which they fall into the wrong hands."

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