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Narcotics Bureau Safely Disposes More Than 10 Tons of Drugs From Permanent Drop Box Sites.

Over the past year, the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics (OBN) has collected and disposed of more than 20,000 pounds of pharmaceutical drugs from permanent drop-off containers around the state. Since March of 2011, OBN has placed 124 pharmaceutical take-back containers in police and sheriff department lobbies for the public to safely dispose of old, unwanted medications in the home. OBN spokesperson Mark Woodward says properly disposing of expired medication is critical. "Prescription drug abuse is a growing epidemic in Oklahoma. It's unnecessary and unsafe to leave outdated drugs in the house. Old, expired medications left in the home can be targeted by users. Teenagers also target their parent's current or expired prescription drugs to abuse, trade or sell in order to obtain alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs."

The permanent disposal containers allow the public to dispose of old medication year-round rather than waiting for an official drug take-back day. Canadian County currently has three prescription drop boxes located at the Yukon Police Department, Mustang Police Department as well as the Canadian County Sheriff's Department. **The drop boxes throughout Canadian County have allowed the community to properly dispose of over 700 pounds of unused medications, keeping the surplus of prescription medications off the street and out of our drinking water.**

OBN Director Darrell Weaver says the disposal containers are vital for preventing the potential disasters caused by keeping unnecessary medication in the home. OBN has a partnership agreement with Covanta Energy in Tulsa to safely destroy the drugs collected from the disposal containers and turns it into clean, renewable energy at no charge to OBN or the state of Oklahoma. This disposal process prevents prescription medications from infiltrating our water system which happens when they are flushed down the drain, or disposed of in landfills, these drugs cannot be removed from water supplies at typical waste treatment plants and have negative effects on the environment.

For more information on the prescription drop-off boxes or other locations, please contact OBN at <http://www.ok.gov/obn/dd/> or for more information on the appropriate disposal of prescription drugs or other substance abuse prevention strategies within Canadian County please contact Red Rock Regional Prevention Coordinator, Michelle Bugg at 1-405-354-1928.