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For Immediate Release

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## **Area Agencies Taking Back Expired, Unwanted Drugs in October**

Local law enforcement agencies, Area Substance & Alcohol Abuse Prevention (ASAAP), and the South Heartland District Health Department (SHDHD) are partnering with the National Drug Enforcement Agency to give the public another opportunity to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. The service is free and anonymous.

Bring your prescription and over-the-counter medications for disposal to one of four sites available in the South Heartland Health District:

- Adams County: South Heartland District Health Department at 606 N. Minnesota Avenue, in Hastings, on Saturday, October 28 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
- Clay County: Ongoing at Clay County Sheriff's Office, in Clay Center
- Nuckolls County: Ongoing at Superior Police Department, in Superior (call before coming: 402-879-4407)
- Webster County: Ongoing at Webster County Sheriff's Office, in Red Cloud

This opportunity addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines 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 home medicine cabinets.

According to Safe Kids Worldwide ([safekids.org](http://safekids.org)), more than 59,000 kids were treated in an emergency room for medicine poisoning in a recent year - - that's one child every 9 minutes. In 2 out of 3 emergency room visits for medicine poisoning, the medicine was left within reach of a child and in 6 out of 7 (86%) of these cases the medicine belonged to a parent or grandparent. Parents and grandparents are urged to learn about how to store medicines safely, give medicines safely, and get rid of medicines safely.

Residents are advised that disposing of unused medicines by flushing them down the toilet or throwing them unaltered into the trash pose potential safety and health hazards. National DEA Drug Take Back events use an environmentally safe method to dispose of the medicines collected during National Drug Take Back Day events.

For more information call SHDHD toll-free at 877-238-7595.

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