



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

A STATE ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

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Media Release

From: Sergeant Donna Black
Public Information Officer, 352-797-3609

Re: Prescription Drugs Can Kill- Public Awareness

Date: April 7, 2010

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS CAN KILL and do if misused, abused or combined with alcohol or illegal drugs.

This is the sobering message the Hernando County Sheriff's Office is sending to the public as part of the on going awareness campaign. During the month of March 2010 and the first week of April the Hernando County Sheriff's Office has responded to seven (7) deaths in which the cause of death is believed to be the result of an overdose of prescription medications. The ages of the victims who died from prescription drugs during that period of time are, 49,47,46,44,41,38,18 with 4 being males and 3 being females.

According to Captain James Walker, Supervisor of the Major Crimes and Narcotic Division, a comparison for a 3 ½ year period (2006 – to first 6 months of 2009) revealed that drug related deaths totaled more than those killed in traffic fatalities in Hernando County (135 vs 127). A possible contributing factor might be that many individuals have a false sense of security believing that taking prescription medications are safer and less addictive than illegal drugs such as cocaine

Remember, familiarize yourself with all the advisories associated with the medications prescribed to you. Check with your prescribing physician before increasing your dosage. And it is illegal to use any medication not prescribed to you even if it belongs to a family member.

If you have prescriptions that you are no longer taking dispose of them properly. Our next Operation Medicine Cabinet is scheduled to take place at the Hurricane Expo on May 1, 2010. Please visit our Sheriff's Office website for more information.

If you believe you have information regarding improper dispensing of prescription medications contact the Hernando County Sheriff Office. If you want to remain anonymous and be eligible to for a reward up to \$1,000.00 call Hernando County Crime Stoppers toll free at 1-866-990-TIPS (8477).