

**Response to Grand Jury Report Form**

**Report Title:** Drug and Sharps Disposal Report

**Report Date:** May 2, 2019

**Response By:** Ventura County Sheriff's Office

Pursuant to California Penal Code Sections 933.05 (c) and (d), the Ventura County Sheriff's Office provided a response to the "Drug and Sharps Disposal" Grand Jury Report.

**BACKGROUND**

On May 30, 2019, the Ventura County Grand Jury provided the Ventura County Sheriff's Office with an additional final report of its investigation entitled, "Drug and Sharps Disposal Report." The Grand Jury concluded that among the County law enforcement facilities that have drug disposal bins, there is a lack of information and consistency in public guidance regarding the disposal of all medications, particularly for pet owners.

**FORMAT OF RESPONSE:**

The Ventura County Sheriff's Office's detailed response to the Grand Jury Report is set forth in the following pages. The response is ordered in the same manner as the report itself – Facts, Conclusions, and Recommendations.

**RESPONSE TO FINDINGS**

There were no Findings in the annual report.

**RESPONSE TO CONCLUSIONS**

**C-01** "The Grand Jury concluded that among the County law enforcement facilities that have drug disposal bins, there is a lack of information and consistency in public guidance regarding the disposal of all medications, particularly for pet owners. (FA-09, FA-10, FA-11, FA-12, FA-13, FA-14, FA-15, FA-16) (Att-01)"

**Response:** The Ventura County Sheriff's Office (VCSO), is the contract law enforcement agency for the City of Thousand Oaks, City of Moorpark, City of Camarillo, City of Fillmore, and City of Ojai. The VCSO also provides law enforcement services to the unincorporated areas of Ventura County. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office understands the importance of unused/expired prescription medications and sharps disposal. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office has designated public lobbies at all patrol stations available for residents to dispose of drugs during regular business hours. None of the patrol stations offer sharps disposal.

#### **RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**R-01** "The Grand Jury recommends that the BOS consider adopting the EPR model for drug and sharps waste disposal throughout the County in order to develop a uniform program that can be used by all County law enforcement agencies and departments. (C-01, C-02, C-03, C-04, C-05, C-06, C-07)"

**Response:** Ventura County Behavioral Health has communicated with Ventura County Environmental Health about the need to develop a County-wide sharps disposal program. This program is intended to be both public and corporate based. Once established, the VCSO will conform to the uniform protocol.

**R-03** "The Grand Jury recommends that all law enforcement agencies update their websites and other sources of public information. Information should include, but not be limited to, guidance regarding the availability of disposal bins for drugs and sharps, accessibility requirements to the bins and directions for disposal. (C-01)"

**Response:** The Ventura County Sheriff's Office (VCSO), is the contract law enforcement agency for the City of Thousand Oaks, City of Moorpark, City of Camarillo, City of Fillmore, and City of Ojai. The VCSO also provides law enforcement to the unincorporated areas of Ventura County. The VCSO patrol stations are not equipped to handle sharps disposal due to the necessary manpower required to monitor sharps disposal bins on a continuous basis. The lack of needed monitoring could lead to improperly disposed of needles, which can pose a variety of hazards to the citizens who routinely visit police lobbies. In some cases, i.e. criminal investigations or other law enforcement contacts, sharps are safely collected by patrol deputies and disposed of in sharps containers that are collected in sharps bins and disposed of by the Ventura County Sheriff's Property Room. Disposal of sharps in these circumstances is manageable due to the small volume.

Ventura County Sheriff's Office agrees with the recommendation of offering sources of public information to communicate drugs and sharps disposal. This will be done through press releases, utilizing the various social media platforms offered by the Ventura County Sheriff's Office, Thousand Oaks Police Department, Moorpark Police Department, Camarillo Police Department, Fillmore Police Department, the Ojai Police Department, and the County of Ventura (i.e. Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor). The Ventura County Sheriff's Office has agreed

to provide links on its website and recommended posting of the links on the websites by the City of Thousand Oaks, City of Moorpark, City of Camarillo, City of Fillmore, the City of Ojai, and the County of Ventura, to direct citizens to locations for drug disposal, including pet medications, and types of sharps disposal. The posted links on these websites will direct citizens to information and locations for drug disposal, including pet medications, and the various types of sharps disposal. These changes will be implemented within two months.

The Ventura County Sheriff's Office will create an agency-wide policy on unused/expired prescription drug bin drop off to make all patrol station locations uniform in handling unused/expired prescription medications. This change will be implemented within two months.

**SUMMARY:**

Ventura County Sheriff's Office wishes to thank the Grand Jury for its time.

Date: July 2., 2019

Signed: 

Chris Dunn, Assistant Sheriff

Number of pages attached  0