

'Terminator' disposes of unused medicines

■ Kentucky State Police demonstrate new incinerator

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It was sent here to reduce the flow of prescription drugs into the underground market.

The Kentucky State Police Post 3 held a demonstration Friday of its new Drug Terminator, an incinerator that disposes of unused prescription drugs.

Looking like a tricked-out trash barrel, the machine is fired by coal and has an interior fan powered by electricity to drive up the temperature inside the incinerator.

The drugs are dropped into the barrel through a device that looks like a detonator, with a plunger that lowers the items into the machine.

A filter over the top of the incinerator removes harmful substances from the smoke emitted from the burning medication.

The Drug Terminator bolsters the prescription drug take-back program initiated in recent years by the area's law enforcement agencies.

In the program, anyone with expired or unused prescription drugs can bring them to drop boxes kept outside the state police post, the Bowling Green Police Department and the Warren County Sheriff's Office and dispose of them anonymously.

Those drugs will now be taken to the KSP Post 3 on Nashville Road for on-site disposal.

The apparatus was donated to the KSP by the Save Our Kids Coalition, which used a grant obtained from the Kentucky Agency on Substance Abuse Policy to buy the \$4,000 incinerator.

"It wouldn't be possible without the Save Our Kids Coalition," said Trooper Jonathan Biven, spokesman for KSP Post 3. "This will help us get these drugs off the street."

Save Our Kids is a Warren County anti-drug coalition that seeks to educate children about the harmful effects of drug abuse and promote public safety.

Eric Gregory, executive director for Save Our Kids, said the incinerator and the take-back program are important components in reducing the availability of pharmaceuticals to potential abusers.

Many officials who track prescription drug abuse have said the drugs that are abused are often kept in unlocked medicine cabinets.

"We all know prescription drugs have been a big issue, and we know the numbers are bad," Gregory said.

The number of deaths from prescription drug overdoses in Kentucky increased from 403 in 2000 to 980 in 2009, according to the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

In a recent survey the coalition passed out to about 8,000 students in Warren County, roughly half of high school students said that prescription drugs were very easy or fairly easy for them to get, and one in six sixth-grade students said the same thing, Gregory said.