



Chicago Pharmacy Technicians Accused of Stealing Hydrocodone Pills

Last month, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois reached a civil settlement with a Chicago pharmacy that allegedly enabled opioids to be diverted outside the pharmacy from 2015 to 2017. During that time, two pharmacy technicians stole more than 56,000 pills of hydrocodone and sold them for a profit.

One of the technicians concealed the theft by falsifying the pharmacy's inventory to make it look like the pills had either not been received from the distributor or had been dispensed to patients. The techs pleaded guilty to federal drug charges and were [sentenced](#) in 2019 to prison terms of five years and one year.



As part of the settlement, the pharmacy will pay a \$250,000 penalty. A DEA inspection found that the pharmacy failed to keep adequate records pertaining to the receipt and disposition of various controlled substances, including hydrocodone-acetaminophen and alprazolam. The pharmacy also failed to provide effective controls and procedures to prevent theft and diversion of controlled substances. Read more about the [case](#).

Operation Vape Trail Targets Illegal Substances Sold in Vape Shops

As part week-long enforcement operation, DEA removed dangerous and illegal vaping substances from communities across America. From September 15 through September 19, DEA seized more than 2.3 million vape devices and cartridges and more than 100 weapons.

Originally designed for nicotine and marketed as a cigarette alternative, recent data suggests that a significant portion of vaping device sales involve illegal substances.

Learn more about the [operation](#) and available [DEA vaping-related resources](#).



DEA Makes Synthetic Opioids Illegal

DEA is proposing to make seven benzimidazole-opioids illegal to manufacture, distribute, import, export, or possess. Those in violation would face administrative, civil, and criminal sanctions.

The availability of these highly potent synthetic opioids in the illicit drug market poses an imminent hazard to public safety. Benzimidazole-opioids have effects similar to fentanyl and morphine. The trafficking and abuse of new synthetic opioids continue to fuel the unprecedented opioid epidemic in the United States, leading to overdoses and death.



The emergency scheduling action classifies the seven drugs as schedule I – drugs with no acceptable medical use and a high potential for abuse. Read more about the [temporary scheduling order](#).

Save the Date for DEA's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

On October 25, 2025, DEA and its law enforcement partners will team up to host DEA's 29th National Prescription Drug Take Back Day at locations across the country.

The event gives the community the opportunity to remove unwanted, expired medications from homes and medicine cabinets to prevent drug misuse before it starts.



Find a [collection site](#) and learn more about [Take Back Day](#).

DEA's Diversion Control Division Remains Open During Government Shutdown



The Diversion Control Division remains open and available to support DEA registrants. The program is not impacted by the government shutdown and current lapse in funding.

For updates, please visit the Diversion Control Division [website](#). To reach the Diversion Control Division, contact the program at 1-800-882-9539 or DEA.Registration.Help@dea.gov.

DEA Hiring Diversion Investigators

Want to join DEA to protect public safety and prevent controlled substances from moving from legitimate channels to illegal distribution? You are in luck – DEA is hiring diversion investigators. Learn more about the [job](#) and how to [apply](#).



Emergency, Psychiatry, and Osteopathic Physicians Meet with DEA Staff Across the Country

Last month, diversion investigators and program specialists fielded questions on emergency medical services regulations, state guidelines, and registrations at the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. ACEP represents 40,000 emergency physicians.



Investigators and staff also discussed stimulant prescriptions and compliance with psychiatrists and other mental health professionals from across the country at the Psychopharmacology Conference in San Diego, Calif.



Thousands of osteopathic doctors and medical students came together in Nashville, Tenn. for the Osteopathic Medical Education Conference, the world's largest osteopathic medical conference.

Diversion investigators educated attendees on training to manage patients with substance use disorders, drug trends, and telemedicine regulations.





Materials Available on Chemical Trends and Pill Press Reporting

Chemical handlers are the first line of defense in preventing and detecting chemical diversion. In July, DEA experts led a virtual, live studio conference addressing the latest chemical trends and controls. DEA Chemical Industry [conference materials](#) are available.

The drug and chemical import and export industry plays a key role in getting prescription drugs to those who need them. A DEA webinar in July addressed procedures, reporting, regulated machines such as pill presses, and other topics. [Webinar materials](#) are available.

Diversion Control Division Enforcement

DEA's Diversion Control Division strives to prevent, detect, and investigate the diversion of controlled pharmaceuticals and listed chemicals from legitimate sources.

When the safety and health of the American people is in jeopardy, DEA takes action against those who violate the law.

Owner of Kansas City, Kansas Pharmacy Agrees to Pay \$200,000 to Resolve Allegations of Violating the Controlled Substances Act
September 24, 2025



U.S. Attorney's Office Announces Settlement with Chicago Pharmacy for Alleged Violations of the Controlled Substances Act
September 15, 2025

Clay County Pharmacy Investigation and Prosecution Ends in Guilty Pleas
September 11, 2025

Three Baton Rouge Individuals Sentenced to Federal Prison in Connection with the Department of Justice's 2024 National Health Care Fraud Enforcement Action
August 20, 2025



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