



**Erie County Health Department**  
*An Accredited Public Health Department*  
**Erie County Community Health Center**  
*A Federally Qualified Health Center*  
**Peter T. Schade, MPH, REHS**  
*Health Commissioner*



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Erie County Health Department and Local Partners Collect 18.5 Pounds of Medication at Successful Drug Take-Back Event**

**Sandusky, OH, February 20, 2026** – On February 19, 2026, the Erie County Health Department (ECHD), in collaboration with the Perkins Township Police Department and Inmar Intelligence, hosted a community drug take-back event at the Walmart in Sandusky. The initiative resulted in the successful collection and safe disposal of 18.5 pounds of unused or expired medications.

While prescription weights vary based on the length of the supply, this total represents approximately 300 individual prescriptions that have been properly disposed of. By removing these items from the community, the department ensures they will not wind up in the wrong hands or contaminate the local water supply, protecting the safety of Erie County residents. In addition to medication collection, the event focused on harm reduction and prevention. ECHD staff distributed Naloxone (Narcan), a life-saving medication used to reverse opioid overdoses, along with Deterra drug-deactivation pouches, which allow residents to safely dispose of medications at home.

"Seeing 18.5 pounds of medication taken out of medicine cabinets and off the streets is amazing," said Irina Buga, Public Health Educator and SPF Grant Coordinator. "This event was a vital part of our Strategic Prevention Framework grant work, allowing us to meet people where they are and provide the tools necessary to prevent accidental poisonings and misuse."

This event was a key component of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) grant, a program dedicated to reducing substance misuse and strengthening community prevention efforts.

"Our mission is to protect the health and well-being of every resident in Erie County," said Peter Schade, Erie County Health Commissioner. "Collaborations like this one with Perkins Police and Inmar Intelligence show that when we work together, we can make a measurable impact."

The partnership between local law enforcement and public health remains a cornerstone of Erie County's strategy to combat the opioid epidemic.

#### **About the Erie County Health Department**

The Erie County Health Department's mission is to promote and improve the health and safety of the communities and environment within Erie County while preventing disease through essential public health services. The Erie County Community Health Center is part of the Erie County Health Department and operates eight convenient locations across Erie, Huron, and Ottawa counties, ensuring accessible primary care, dental, and behavioral health services throughout the region.

For more information about Health Department or Health Center services, visit [www.ErieCoHealthOhio.com](http://www.ErieCoHealthOhio.com).

#### **Media Contact:**

Pete Schade, Health Commissioner  
Erie County Health Department  
(567)867-5112 | [pschade@echdohio.org](mailto:pschade@echdohio.org) | [www.ErieCoHealthOhio.com](http://www.ErieCoHealthOhio.com)