

**Key Measures of Prescription Drug and Heroin Problems in San Diego County.** Visit [www.SanDiegoRxAbuseTaskForce.org](http://www.SanDiegoRxAbuseTaskForce.org) for more information



The Rx Report Card provides concrete data on the scale of the prescription drug abuse problem by looking at multiple factors and data points over the last five years in San Diego County. Readers are cautioned not to consider a single data point alone, but rather are encouraged to look at all the information, as well as the direction of the trends over time.

New this year is that Rx-related prosecution data now includes data from the City of San Diego City Attorney’s office, back filled to 2012. This is a much more accurate portrayal of prosecution efforts. While the actual numbers are small, the change in burglaries is a real phenomenon also seen in neighboring counties. Misuse and abuse of these drugs have serious consequences for health and safety of San Diego County residents, as well as our public health and safety community systems. Data sources are listed on the back page. Additional detailed data, including an alert about Fentanyl, is available in the 2017 Rx Addendum.

2017 Prescription Drug (Rx) Abuse Report Card						
	Indicator	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
1	<b>Unintentional Rx-Related Deaths</b>					
	• Number	268	259	244	248	253
	• (Rate per 100,000 residents)	(9.8)	(8.2)	(7.6)	(7.7)	(7.7)
2	<b>Emergency Department (ED) Opiate Activity</b>	3,791	5,723	6,866	7,501	Not Available until 2018
	• Number of Discharges	(121.2)	(181.7)	(214.9)	(228)	
	• (Rate per 100,000 residents)					
3	<b>11<sup>th</sup> Graders Self Report of Lifetime Rx Misuse</b>		13%		14%	
4	<b>Total Adult Drug Treatment Admissions</b>	14,383	16,629	16,104	15,177	15,790
	• Percentage of Prescription Pain Medication	4.7%	4.5%	4.5%	4.3%	4.1%
	• Percentage of Heroin	23.1%	24.8%	27.7%	28.6%	28.2%
5	<b>Arrestees Self Report of Rx Misuse</b>					
	• Adult	38%	43%	39%	42%	49%
	• Juvenile	40%	37%	37%	43%	40%
6	<b>Rx Prosecutions<sup>1</sup></b>					
	• Rx-specific Fraud Charge	523	431	308	117	140
	• Other Charges with Rx-involved	1,089	1,064	1,237	1,353	1,422
7	<b>Pharmacy Robberies/Burglaries</b>	8	5	8	6	31
8	<b>Pounds of Safely Disposed Medications</b>					
	• Take Back Events	16,707	18,732	17,676	14,595	17,772
	• Sheriff’s Department Collection Boxes	9,902	13,872	13,079	14,725	15,901
9	<b>Annual Number of Dispensed Pills Per County Resident</b>					
	• Pain Medication	37.9	36.3	39.7	39.1 <sup>2</sup>	36.5
	• Anti-anxiety	13.8	13.7	13.3	13.1	12.5
	• Stimulants	4.8	4.9	4.7	5	5.2

<sup>1</sup> Prosecution numbers reported from the San Diego County District Attorney and City of San Diego City Attorney as a combined total.

<sup>2</sup> Tramadol has been used for pain for many years, but was only added as a Schedule IV medication in August 2014, thus added to CURES. Without Tramadol, the 2016 rate is 30.2; there were 19 Tramadol deaths in both 2012/2013, 20 in 2014, 17 in both 2015 and 2016.

## 2017 Heroin Addendum

Heroin abuse is a recognized national problem. San Diego County's experience is unique. Heroin seizures and overdoses show high points in 2014/2015, and many indicators are relatively stable. Local and national studies note that younger users switch to heroin after painkillers are harder to find or pay for.

Selected Heroin Indicators	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>1. Heroin Seizures (Kgs.) At San Diego County Ports of Entry</b>	470	689	756	941	591
<b>2. Heroin Price per Gram</b>	\$50-90	\$50-100	\$50-70	\$40-80	\$40-80
<b>3. Adult Arrestees Testing Positive for Heroin</b>	11%	12%	13%	12%	11%
<b>4. Treatment Admissions with Heroin Listed as Primary Drug of Choice</b>	23%	25%	28%	28.6%	28%
<b>5. Number of Heroin Overdose Deaths</b>	74	86	105	90	91
<b>A. Percentage of deaths with heroin detected as part of all illicit drug overdoses</b>	34%	32%	36%	31.5%	29.1%
<b>B. Percentage of all overdose deaths</b>	15%	16%	17%	17.8%	16.7%

## Definitions and Sources for Report Card Indicators

- Unintentional deaths with prescription drug or involvement. San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) population figures based on actual 2010 Census data. *Source: County of San Diego Medical Examiner's Office.*
- Emergency department discharges per 100,000 with a diagnosis of opiate dependence or abuse. Prior to 2010, hospitals in Fallbrook and Coronado were not included. The 2010 figure represents data from all non-federal hospitals with emergency departments in San Diego County. *Source: County of San Diego Emergency Medical Services.*
- Percent of a sample of San Diego County 11<sup>th</sup> graders who report using Rx drugs for non-medical reasons in their lifetime. Collected biannually in the California Healthy Kids Survey.
- Total admissions to publicly-funded drug treatment in San Diego County that identify Rx Opiates or Heroin as primary drugs of choice. *Source: California Outcomes Measurement System (CalOMS).*
- Percent that report lifetime Rx misuse/abuse from a sample of interviews among adult and juvenile arrestees at time of booking. The 2009 question used the term painkiller; in 2010, the question wording referred to the category of all Rx drugs. *Source: Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM), a program operated by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG).*
- Number of defendants prosecuted by the San Diego County District Attorney's Office and the City of San Diego City Attorney (misdemeanors only) for either Rx-related fraud, or other criminal charges where Rx was present. *Source: San Diego County District Attorney's Office and San Diego City Attorney's office.*
- Number of pharmacy robberies & burglaries reported to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Does not include attempted robberies and burglaries. *Source: DEA*
- Pounds of medication safely disposed at Rx Take Back events. *Source: DEA.* Pounds collected at Sheriff's Department collection boxes. *Source: San Diego County Sheriff's Department.*
- Prescription pills per San Diego County resident. The numbers of prescribed pills are derived from prescriber (dispenser) reporting to the state, and do not include prescriptions filled at the VA, any military hospitals and clinics, or in-hospital patient medications. Three principle groups of medicine are included: a) Pain medication or morphine-related pain medications such as OxyContin or hydrocodone; b) Anti-anxiety medications or benzodiazepines such as Valium or Ativan; c) Stimulants or ADHD medication such as Ritalin, Adderall. Pain medication includes only pills; solution-based prescriptions are 2.5% of all pain medication and are not included. In 2012, more than 163 million doses of pain medicine were prescribed. Population figures used to calculate per person rates are based on US Census and SANDAG population projection data across all ages. *Source: Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES), California Department of Justice.*

Note: Heroin indicators are also drawn from the Medical Examiner's Office, SANDAG's Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program and the CalOMS treatment database. Seizure and price information was obtained from the San Diego Law Enforcement Coordination Center.