



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305

**MARCH 2013**

- WVAGO joined 47 attorneys general on letter asking the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to ensure that generic manufacturers of opioid prescription drugs use tamper-resistant and abuse-resistant formulations.

**APRIL 2013**

- Office of the Attorney General partnered with the Division of Protective Services to participate in the sixth DEA National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday, April 27 at the West Virginia Capitol.
- WVAGO requested new prosecutorial authority from the Legislature to help pursue criminals who facilitate our prescription drug abuse problems in West Virginia.

**MAY 2013**

- WVAGO joined 42 other states and territories in a letter to the FDA seeking “black box” warnings on all opioid-based pain killers to alert pregnant women that using the medicine during pregnancy could cause Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome.

**SEPTEMBER 2013**

- Office of Attorney General announces the creation of an internal task force to address substance abuse. This is a first of its kind unit in the office.
- Attorney General applauds the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for its decision to change safety labels on extended-release and long-acting opioid analgesics. This is a measure that WVAGO, along with 42 other states, requested in May 2013.

**OCTOBER 2013**

- Office of the Attorney General participated in the seventh DEA National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Oct. 26 at the West Virginia Capitol.

## **DECEMBER 2013**

- West Virginia joined 40 other state and territories in sending a letter to the FDA urging it to require manufacturers of generic prescription pain relievers to develop tamper-resistant versions of their products.

## **JANUARY 2014**

- Office of Attorney General, partnering with the Public Health Trust Fund, announced its program to place drug drop off boxes in counties and communities where local law enforcement has said there is a need.
- WVAGO announced that it will ask Legislature to limit the amount of pseudoephedrine that legally may be purchased by an individual to 24 grams per year. This cut the limit from 48 grams per year.
- WVAGO announced that it will advocate for lawmakers to establish a “meth offender registry,” which will enable law enforcement to more easily track known offenders.
- The Attorney General’s Office also is advocating that the Legislature pass a bill that would make it illegal to engage in smurfing, or the purchasing of large quantities of pseudoephedrine by several people working for the same cook.
- Office also agreed to work with the Legislature to organize a state-wide anti-smurfing campaign to educate the public about the dangers of smurfing

## **FEBRUARY 2014**

- WVAGO announced that it will partner with local law enforcement agencies across West Virginia to help fight the state’s prescription drug abuse epidemic by expanding access to secure disposal locations, drop boxes, for unwanted or expired prescription drugs.

## **MARCH 2014**

- WVAGO sent a letter to the Drug Enforcement Administration, supporting the agency’s rescheduling of hydrocodone combination products from Schedule III to Schedule II.

## **APRIL 2014**

- Office of the Attorney General participated in the eighth DEA National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday, April 26 at the West Virginia Capitol.

- WVAGO joins four other Attorneys General in letter to FDA expressing disappointment in its handling of the approval process for the drug Zohydro.

#### **JUNE 2014**

- WVAGO announced \$22MM settlement with GlaxoSmithKline.

#### **AUGUST 2014**

- WVAGO released statement in response to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's decision to reclassify hydrocodone-combination medications as Schedule II pharmaceuticals, which will result in tighter restrictions on how the medication can be prescribed.

#### **FEBRUARY 2015**

- WVAGO joined a letter with 42 other state and territorial attorneys general asking nine oil companies to collaborate with their franchisees to help eliminate illegal synthetic drugs from gas station and convenience stores.

#### **APRIL 2015**

- WVAGO announced that a permanent injunction was entered against the owner of a Georgia-based business that sold illegal synthetic drugs in West Virginia.

[The Circuit Court of Putnam County fined Drew Green, the owner of the now-defunct Nutrigenomics Manufacturing LLC, \$375,000 in civil penalties for violating the West Virginia Consumer Credit and Protection Act by misleading customers and mislabeling the chemicals his company sold over the phone and online. Additionally, the court ordered Green to pay \$18,357.54 in restitution.]

#### **DECEMBER 2015**

- West Virginia Attorney General and U.S. Attorney William J. Ihlenfeld unveiled a unique partnership today designed to intensify efforts in West Virginia to combat drug trafficking and enhance prevention initiatives.

[Attorney General Morrissey and U.S. Attorney Ihlenfeld announced that two attorneys from the Attorney General's Office will be designated as special assistant United States attorneys. In their federal capacity, these attorneys will handle drug cases with a special emphasis on the prosecution of heroin trafficking organizations from Baltimore, Maryland.]

- WVAGO announced a partnership with Paden City and Jackson County police officers aimed at fighting opioid drug abuse by expanding access to secure disposal locations for unwanted or expired prescription medications.
- WVAGO announced that its Substance Abuse specialist has given 73 presentations in 19 counties since January of 2015.
- WVAGO announced its goal of establishing permanent drug drop boxes to every county in West Virginia. At the time of announcement, DRoP sites had been announced for Shepherdstown and Paden City, Boone, Jackson and Roane counties.
- WVAGO announced that representatives will have pamphlets containing substance abuse treatment information for each county. This will be in addition to another handout that provides valuable knowledge and educates consumers as to the proper storage and disposal of prescription medication.
- WVAGO made initial announcement that it is collaborating with groups involved in the prescription drug supply chain to develop a “Best Practices Toolkit” in an effort to enforce the safe and appropriate use of opioids when treating patients, while minimizing the risk of addiction and substance abuse.

### **DECEMBER 2015**

- Attorney General Patrick Morrisey sent a letter to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles Trump and House Judiciary Committee Chairman John Shott urging them to explore the 24/7 Sobriety Program substance abuse recidivism initiative during the 2016 legislative session.

### **JANUARY 2016**

- WVAGO announced its filing of a lawsuit against McKesson Corporation, one of the largest prescription drug manufacturers in the world, for failing to identify, detect, report and help stop the flood of suspicious drug orders into the state.
- WVAGO joined 35 states and the District of Columbia this week in writing a letter urging the CDC to quickly adopt proposed guidelines for prescribing opioid painkillers.

## **FEBRUARY 2016**

- WVAGO announced a \$2.5MM settlement with Miami-Luken, a regional pharmaceutical distributor that allegedly failed to detect, report, and stop the flood of suspicious orders into WV.
- WVAGO announced the first conviction as result of a partnership with U.S. Attorney Ihlenfeld in northern West Virginia. Francisco Sanchez, of Kearneysville, was found guilty of conspiracy and possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine.

## **MARCH 2016**

- WVAGO announced a second attorney from the office has been sworn in as a special assistant federal prosecutor, expanding the office's fight against the state's drug epidemic.
- NAAG announced that AG Morrissey will sit on the Special Committee on Substance Abuse for the third consecutive year.
- WVAGO encouraged insurers, medical professionals, and healthcare regulators to consider quickly implementing new opioid prescription guidelines as outlined Tuesday by the CDC. These guidelines come on the heels of a letter sent in January by WVAGO to the CDC requesting they expedite the release.

## **APRIL 2016**

- WVAGO joined a coalition of 33 states asking the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to permit methadone clinics to submit dispensing data to the state controlled substances monitoring program.
- WVAGO sent a letter to Pennsylvania officeholders applauding expansion of the state's prescription drug monitoring program and strongly encouraged state leaders to take the necessary steps to join a national database.
- WVAGO announced the office will send \$10M back to the state's General Fund and governor's office in hopes to spur drug abuse treatment and reduce the backlog of drug tests at the WV State Police crime lab.

- WVAGO participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday, April 30 at the West Virginia Capitol. The fourth year AG Morrissey's office has participated.
- WVAGO publicly requested a large malpractice insurance company discount premiums for doctors who further their education in treating pain with non-opioid alternatives, a first-of-its-kind proposal aimed at reducing the state's number of drug overdose deaths.

## **MAY 2016**

- WVAGO announced that AG Patrick Morrissey, Ohio AG Mike Dewine and a host of experts will gather Friday, May 13, to empower local communities and faith-based groups in their fight against substance abuse.
- WVAGO reiterated the office's request to use the returned \$10M to be used to fund drug abuse treatment and reduce the backlog of drug tests at the West Virginia State Police crime lab.
- WVAGO unveils draft best practices initiative aimed at eradicating prescription drug abuse by better equipping the state's prescribers and pharmacists. These initiatives drew support from medical professionals and members of the law enforcement community.
- WVAGO's federal partnership with U.S. Attorney Ihlenfeld nets first prison sentence for possession and intent to distribute methamphetamine.
- WVAGO provides funding for prescription drug incinerators to help DRoP drug disposal box sites dispose of collected medication.
- WVAGO's draft best practices initiative receives further support of the West Virginia Registered Nurses Board

## **JUNE 2016**

- WVAGO nets its fourth drug conviction in partnership with U.S. Attorney Ihlenfeld
- WVAGO teams with the WV Board of Medicine and WV Board of Osteopathy to launch a PSA initiative aimed at reducing opioid abuse. The initiative depicted prescription opioid abuse as a killer loose in West Virginia that was responsible for nearly 20,000 deaths nationwide in 2014. The PSAs were available via print, radio and social media.

## **JULY 2016**

- WVAGO called on the federal government to remove questions from a federal hospital survey, which he believes encourages doctors to over prescribe opioids. The Attorney General outlined his concern in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services regarding its Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems Survey. The letter highlights three questions linking pain management with government reimbursements.
- U.S. Attorney partnership reaches three sentences in drug trafficking cases.
- WVAGO helped the Board of Pharmacy launch cutting-edge technology—called a Morphine Equivalency Calculator—to help prescribers and pharmacists reduce opioid overprescription in the Mountain State.
- WVAGO teams with the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission, West Virginia Board of Medicine and the West Virginia Physical Therapy Association among other groups to tackle the issue of opioid use in high school athletics.