



COUNTY OF KENOSHA

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Suspected overdose deaths raise concerns in Medical Examiner's Office

Kenosha County Medical Examiner Patrice Hall is again warning of the dangers of drug use after her office responded to three suspected overdose deaths in a recent three-day period.

“While the specific causes of these deaths will not be confirmed until toxicology results arrive, we know that we are continuing to see a sad, dangerous trend of fentanyl-laced drugs in the community,” Hall said. “I cannot stress enough how dangerous it is to use substances — including prescription drugs — that were obtained illegally.”

Fentanyl is a powerful opioid that authorities locally and nationally report is increasingly found to be added to other drugs, including counterfeit prescription pills, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana.

Using just a small amount of fentanyl can be deadly, and users often do not even realize it is in the substances they have obtained, Hall cautioned.

In 2021, 40 of the 53 toxicity deaths in Kenosha County involved the presence of fentanyl or a fentanyl analog, according to Medical Examiner's Office data.

“While the safest way to stay safe from fentanyl is to avoid illegal drugs, there are resources available for those who choose to use,” Hall said.

This includes fentanyl test strips, which became legal in Wisconsin earlier this year and are now available from Kenosha County Public Health and Vivent Health Kenosha. These can be used to detect the presence of fentanyl in other substances.

Strips may be picked up from 8:30 to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday at the Kenosha County Public Health Job Center Clinic, 8600 Sheridan Road, Kenosha. For more information, call 262-605-6775.

Vivent Health-Kenosha, may be reached at 262-657-6644 or online at <https://viventhealth.org/locations/kenosha/>.

Kenosha County Public Health also offers training and free supplies of Narcan, a life-saving medication that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose.

More information about this program is available at <https://www.kenoshacounty.org/1916/Narcan-Distribution-Program>, by calling 262-605-6741, or by sending an email to narcan@kenoshacounty.org.

“Help is available for people struggling with drug use, and recovery is possible,” Hall said. “There are life-saving resources available in the community, and we urge people to access them.”

More information about other drug prevention and recovery programs and resources is available at <https://www.kenoshacounty.org/1844/Drug-Prevention-Programs> and <https://www.saveliveskenosha.org>.

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