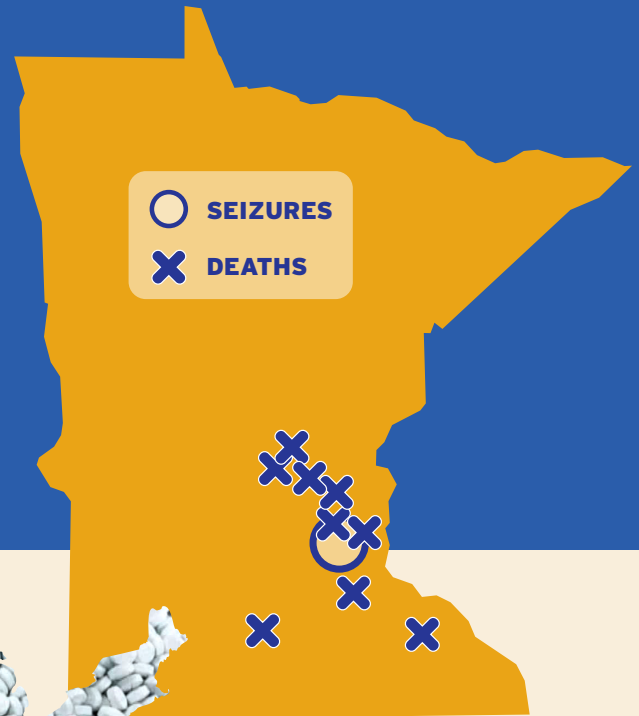
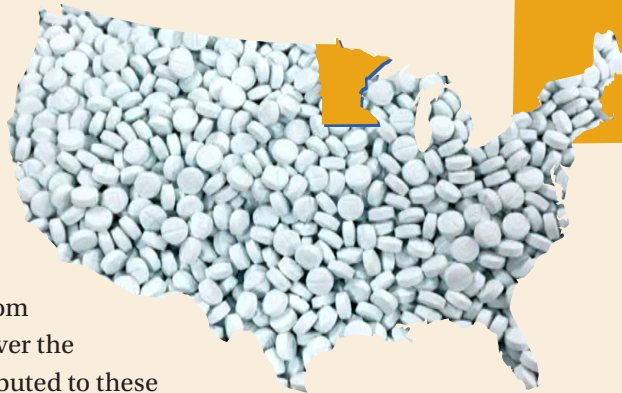


Fake Medicines Harm People Throughout Minnesota



COUNTERFEIT PILLS MADE WITH FENTANYL CONTINUE THEIR DEADLY SPREAD

In just the first five weeks of 2021, police in **Faribault, Rochester, and Roseville** each reported two deaths from suspected counterfeit fentanyl pills. Over the course of 2020, there were deaths attributed to these deadly fake pills in **St. Cloud, Mankato, Coon Rapids, Ham Lake, and Anoka and Sherburne Counties**. The Minneapolis/St. Paul DEA office reported more pills seized in the first seven months of 2020 than in all of 2019.



February 2021, Rochester: Police seized 6,000 oxycodone pills during a traffic stop.



January 2021, Faribault: Two people suffered fatal overdoses after ingesting suspected fake pills.



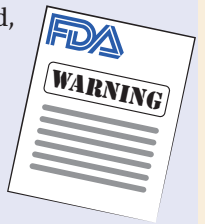
December 2020, Rush City: Man indicted for allegedly selling counterfeit oxycodone pills that killed one in Ham Lake in May.



Fake medications have already hurt and killed too many people. Protect the people of Minnesota by protecting and strengthening the U.S. drug supply chain.

COUNTERFEIT MEDICINE IS NOT JUST SOLD ON STREET CORNERS

Although it is one of the most secure in the world, there have been breaks in the U.S.'s legitimate drug supply chain. Between 2012 and 2016, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sent over 3,000 warning letters to doctors and medical practices, including 21 in Minnesota, to stop **purchasing prescription drugs from known black market wholesalers**. Medications mentioned in these warning letters included **drugs to treat cancer, osteoporosis, migraines, and more**.



Individuals have also threatened the lives of fellow Minnesotans by illegally importing and selling counterfeit medications. Since 2013, three police raids at Hmong marketplaces in St. Paul have turned up an array of fake medications being sold. The FDA received reports of multiple people becoming ill from these products. In the most recent raid, police seized **misbranded and counterfeit medications, drugs that require a prescription, and creams that contained mercury**.

COUNTERFEIT AND BLACK MARKET DRUG INVESTIGATIONS IN MINNESOTA, 2009-2021



BASED ON REPORTED INVESTIGATIONS.

COUNTERFEIT PILLS CONTAINING FENTANYL

- February 2021:** Police in Rochester and Roseville warned the public after two individuals in each town fatally overdosed on counterfeit pills containing fentanyl.¹ Several days later, the Rochester Police Department reported seizing 6,000 pills during a traffic stop.²
- January 2021:** Police in Faribault found oxycodone pills they believed were counterfeits made with fentanyl when they responded to a report of two deceased individuals in a home.³
- December 2020:** A Rush City man was indicted for third-degree murder after he allegedly sold fake oxycodone pills containing fentanyl that caused the May 2020 death of an individual in Ham Lake.⁴
- November 2020:** Authorities filed charges against a man from Coon Rapids who allegedly sold counterfeit oxycodone pills that caused one death and one overdose in May 2020.⁵
- October 2020:** Douglas County courts indicted an Esko resident for his alleged role in selling the counterfeit fentanyl pills that killed a St. Louis County, Wisconsin man in February.⁶
- October 2020:** Benton County District Court charged a St. Cloud man with third-degree murder for allegedly selling the counterfeit oxycodone pills made with fentanyl that caused a fatal overdose.⁷
- August 2020:** Officers with the Sherburne County Sheriff's Office linked the increase in overdoses to counterfeit OxyContin pills being sold in the area.⁸
- August 2020:** The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's Minneapolis/St. Paul office reported seizing 46,000 counterfeit fentanyl pills in the first seven months of the year. That amount is nearly four times the number of pills seized in all of 2019.⁹
- June 2020:** Blue Earth County District Court filed a case against a drug dealer suspected of selling the counterfeit fentanyl pill that killed a 23-year-old in Mankato on May 21, 2020.¹⁰
- May 2020:** The Anoka County Sheriff's Office warned the public about a series of fentanyl poisonings, four fatal, from counterfeit oxycodone pills believed to contain fentanyl.¹¹
- May 2020:** A federal grand jury indicted a Minneapolis man for allegedly manufacturing and selling counterfeit fentanyl pills.¹²
- January 2020:** Police in St. Paul reported 34 suspected overdoses over a seven-day period starting December 27, 2019. Police believed some of the individuals overdosed on counterfeit Xanax pills.¹³
- October 2019:** Authorities arraigned a St. Cloud man who allegedly provided a counterfeit oxycodone pill to a man who died of fentanyl poisoning in February 2019.¹⁴
- March 2019:** Minnesota's Department of Public Safety issued a public warning when a 38-year-old woman in Mankato died after taking a counterfeit oxycodone pill that contained fentanyl.¹⁵ Police charged the man who allegedly sold her the pills the following month.¹⁶
- November 2018:** A man received probation for distributing counterfeit, fentanyl-laced oxycodone pills that he had purchased online. Three Northfield residents overdosed after taking those pills, but first responders were able to revive them.¹⁷
- March 2018:** A Chisago County man received an eight-year sentence after a jury convicted him of the third-degree murder of an 18-year-old who was fatally poisoned by a counterfeit oxycodone made with fentanyl in 2016.¹⁸ His girlfriend and accomplice, who was convicted of third-degree unintentional aiding and abetting murder, received a 45-day county jail sentence and mandatory enrollment in a residential treatment program.¹⁹
- January 2018:** A man in Grand Forks, North Dakota received 65 months in jail for his role in a drug trafficking ring that sold counterfeit oxycodone made with fentanyl in northwest Minnesota and North Dakota.²⁰
- December 2017:** Sarah Doppler of Golden Valley faced a charge of third-degree murder for selling counterfeit pills to a man who died after taking them. Tests showed the pills contained fentanyl and U-47700.²¹ After pleading guilty, Doppler received a sentence of one year in the Hennepin County workhouse.²²

- May 2017:** The U.S. District Court, District of Utah's indictment of Aaron Shamo showed that his fentanyl drug ring shipped counterfeit pills into Minnesota.²³
- August 2016:** Local officials warned about the dangers of counterfeit pills made with fentanyl after test results of pills found at Prince's home were released to the public.²⁴
- April 2016:** Prince Rogers Nelson was found dead in an elevator at Paisley Park. Testing showed hydrocodone pills seized after his death contained fentanyl. Prince weighed only 112 pounds at the time of his death and his autopsy showed such a high level of fentanyl that would have killed anyone.²⁵ To date, no one has been charged in Nelson's death.
- April 2016:** Authorities warned Minnesotans that fentanyl had arrived in the state. Police began investigating after a series of deaths the previous month.²⁶

BLACK MARKET AND COUNTERFEIT CANCER DRUGS

- May 2013:** The FDA warned 780 medical practices, seven in Minnesota, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which had sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.²⁷

MISBRANDED AND COUNTERFEIT BOTOX

- March 2016:** The FDA warned 11 doctors and clinics in Minnesota and more than 1,200 nationwide to stop buying from Canadian distributor TC Medical, which sold 22 different kinds of non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Botox.²⁸
- July 2013:** The FDA warned two doctors and medical practices in Minnesota to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.²⁹
- November 2012:** One Minnesota doctor was among the 350 nationwide that received warning letters indicating that they may have purchased counterfeit versions of Botox from Quality Specialty Products (QSP), a CanadaDrugs subsidiary.³⁰

OTHER DRUGS

- October 2018:** Police seized misbranded and counterfeit drugs from vendors at a Hmong market in St. Paul.³¹
- May 2015:** Minnesota Independent Cooperative Inc. (MIC) was indicted for selling almost \$400 million in prescription drugs from illegal, unlicensed sources to wholesalers and pharmacies in 40 states. The indictment alleged that MIC employees created phony invoices and purchase orders to hide the drugs' origins before selling them.³²
- March 2015:** The Ramsey County Sheriff's Office seized counterfeit drugs for sale by vendors at the Hmongtown Marketplace in St. Paul. Seven vendors at the same market were charged in 2013 with selling counterfeit drugs and syringes.³³
- October 2009:** Two Twin Cities men were indicted for shipping more than 15,000 doses of counterfeit drugs to customers.³⁴ Each man was sentenced to nine months in prison and ordered to pay a fine of more than \$21,750 in April 2010.³⁵

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