



**Drug Enforcement Administration**  
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January 11, 2023  
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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **DEA New Orleans Division Announces the Seizure of Over 20 Million Deadly Doses of Fentanyl in 2022**

**NEW ORLEANS** – A few weeks ago, the Drug Enforcement Administration announced the seizure of over 50.6 million fentanyl-laced, fake prescription pills and more than 10,000 pounds of fentanyl powder this calendar year. The New Orleans Field Division, which covers the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Arkansas, seized 501,761 of those pills and 613 of those pounds. The DEA Laboratory estimates that the New Orleans Field Division seizures represent more than 20.2 million potentially deadly doses of fentanyl. Those deadly doses could kill more than the entire population the New Orleans Field Division serves in these four states.

Fentanyl is the deadliest drug threat facing this country. It is a highly addictive man-made opioid that is 50 times more potent than heroin. Just two milligrams of fentanyl, the small amount that fits on the tip of a pencil, is considered a potentially deadly dose.

“The men and women of the DEA New Orleans Field Division have relentlessly worked to seize over 20.2 million deadly doses of fentanyl from communities across this four-state region,” said Brad L. Byerley, Special Agent in Charge of DEA’s New Orleans Field Division. “These seizures reflect our unwavering commitment to protect the communities where we live and work, pursuing anyone responsible for the trafficking of fentanyl. DEA’s top operational priority is to defeat the two Mexican drug cartels—the Sinaloa and Jalisco (CJNG) Cartels—that are primarily responsible for the fentanyl that is killing Americans today.”

Most of the fentanyl trafficked by the Sinaloa and CJNG Cartels is being mass-produced at secret factories in Mexico with chemicals sourced largely from China. In 2021, the DEA issued a [Public Safety Alert](#) on the widespread drug trafficking of fentanyl in the form of fentanyl-laced, fake prescription pills. These pills are made to look identical to real prescription medications—including OxyContin®, Percocet®, and Xanax®—but only contain filler and fentanyl, and are often deadly.

Fake pills are readily found on social media. No pharmaceutical pill bought on social media is safe. The only safe medications are ones prescribed directly to you by a trusted medical professional and dispensed by a licensed pharmacist.

In November 2022, DEA alerted the public to a sharp nationwide [increase in the lethality](#) of fentanyl-laced fake prescription pills. DEA laboratory testing in 2022 revealed that six out of ten fentanyl-laced, fake prescription pills contained a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl. This is an increase from DEA's announcement in 2021 that four out of ten fentanyl-laced, fake prescription pills contain a potentially deadly dose.

In 2022, DEA seized more than double the amount of fentanyl-laced, fake prescription pills that it seized in 2021. DEA also seized nearly 131,000 pounds of methamphetamine, more than 4,300 pounds of heroin, and over 444,000 pounds of cocaine.

DEA's New Orleans Field Division seized 2,685 pounds of methamphetamine, 150 pounds of heroin, and 1,006 pounds of cocaine.

DEA is now providing a regularly updated counter at <http://www.dea.gov> to track approximate amounts of fentanyl pills and fentanyl powder seized by DEA.

DEA has created a Faces of Fentanyl memorial to commemorate the lives lost from fentanyl poisoning. To submit a photo of a loved one lost to fentanyl, please send their name, age, and photograph to [fentanylawareness@dea.gov](mailto:fentanylawareness@dea.gov), or post a photo and their name to social media using the hashtag #JustKNOW.

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