Pharmacy Theft and Robbery

Awareness and Prevention
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Region II Narcotics Task Force
San Juan County, NM
U.S. Theft and Robbery
January 2012-January 2013

- Retail Pharmacies reporting armed robberies = 214
- Retail pharmacies reporting night burglaries = 427
- Retail pharmacies reporting customer thefts = 63
- Retail pharmacies reporting employee pilferage = 40

Drug Enforcement Administration
U.S. Theft and Robbery
January 2012-January 2013

- Chain pharmacies reporting armed robberies = 517
- Chain pharmacies reporting night burglaries = 89
- Chain pharmacies reporting customer thefts = 63
- Chain pharmacies reporting employee pilferage = 851

Drug Enforcement Administration
N.M. Theft and Robbery
January 2012-January 2013

- Retail Pharmacies reporting armed robberies = 1 (Santa Fe)
- Retail pharmacies reporting night burglaries = 2 (Abq & Santa Fe.)
- Retail pharmacies reporting customer thefts = 0
- Retail pharmacies reporting employee pilferage = 0

Drug Enforcement Administration
N.M. Theft and Robbery
January 2012-January 2013

- Chain pharmacies reporting armed robberies = 5 (3 Abq, 2 Santa Fe).
- Chain pharmacies reporting night burglaries = 0
- Chain pharmacies reporting customer thefts = 0
- Chain pharmacies reporting employee pilferage = 5 (3 Abq, 1 Santa Fe, 1 Hobbs).

Drug Enforcement Administration
PHARMACY THEFT

Awareness

- Maintain inventory of controlled substances.
- Monitor staff for changes in behavior, mood, etc.
- Contact law enforcement if theft/burglary is suspected. Provide a detailed description of what was stolen.
PHARMACY THEFT

- Limit access to narcotics.

- Regularly inventory C-II and C-III narcotics (Lortab).

- Criminal background checks for all pharmacy staff.
PHARMACY THEFT

- Alarm codes for all personnel.
- Limit issuance of keys.
- Change locks, alarm codes and safe combinations when employees leave.
PHARMACY THEFT

- Positively identify and record the identity of non-pharmacy personnel who enter areas where controlled substances are kept.

- Ensure lighting is adequate during business hours and after closing.
Pharmacy Theft
Farmington Walgreen’s

August 2011

San Juan County Sheriff’s Office deputy investigated a vehicle crash in Farmington. The driver, Charlton Dann, crashed into another vehicle and was transported by ambulance to the hospital.

The deputy saw two prescription drug bottles without labels near the scene. Both bottles contained two types of controlled substances.
The deputy interviewed the Dann at the hospital. He admitted the controlled substances found near the crash were his. Dann also admitted he hid the bottles at the crash scene. The deputy saw he was wearing a Walgreen’s employee name tag and asked him where he got the pills. He said he stole a few from Walgreen’s and the rest were from an old injury.
Dann said he stole a few pills for a headache. He was in possession of approximately 75 Lortab and 131 Tramadol tablets. Dann was arrested for DUI and Possession of controlled substances.
Dann was interviewed by the Region II Narcotics Task Force Diversion investigators. He stated he had been a Pharmacy Technician for 4 months. Dann admitted that he had stolen all the drugs. He began taking orders from people in Shiprock, NM on the Navajo Nation. Dann would steal Lortab and Tramadol and stockpile them. He had been stealing and selling drugs for 1 month. Dann would remove Lortab from the automatic dispensing machine during the day. Dann said he took stolen Lortab as he got off work and passed out on the way home, crashing his car.
Dann was initially charged by the San Juan County District Attorney’s Office with Possession of a Controlled Substance with Intent to Distribute, Embezzlement and Tampering with Evidence.

Dann voluntarily surrendered his NM Pharmacy Technician’s certification.
The DEA was contacted by Region II. The DEA took over the case and Dann was charged by the U.S. Attorney’s Office with Distribution of a Controlled Substance.
PHARMACY ROBBERY
Prevention

- Place all narcotics out of sight behind counter.
- Place C-II narcotics in a locked cabinet with limited access.
- Have obvious surveillance; cameras in plain sight.
  - a. Maintain video equipment.
  - b. Retain recordings as long as possible.
  - c. Conceal recorders.
ATTENTION
YOU ARE UNDER SURVEILLANCE
PHARMACY ROBBERY

Prevention

■ Have a properly working alarm system.
  Install a hold-up/duress alarm.

■ Train staff in robbery awareness, suspicious persons.
  Acknowledge customers.
  Watch for people hanging around store not making purchases.

■ Be aware of suspicious activity outside store.
PHARMACY ROBBERY

Prevention

- Have good physical barriers to prevent counter being crossed easily.

Install steel window curtains and door.
According to a Santa Fe police report, Smith brandished a silver snub-nosed handgun and tried to steal oxycodone from Wiley Chemists. When the pharmacist wouldn’t provide him with the pills, Smith ran away, the report says.
The next day, according to Santa Fe County sheriff’s Lt. William Pacheco, Smith allegedly brandished a similar silver revolver and demanded the same medication at Medicap Pharmacy. Pacheco said Thursday that Smith pointed the gun at the Medicap clerk, who then pointed in the direction of the pills and “ran out of the building.” Smith allegedly made off with about 500 tablets from the Eldorado pharmacy.
Killer in NY pharmacy slaying sentenced to life without parole

- David Laffer pleaded guilty to first-degree murder in the June 2011 holdup at Haven Drugs in Medford, NY. Laffer said he committed the robbery because he had lost his job, and his wife required not only painkillers but also blood pressure medicine, anti-nausea pills and muscle relaxants. He jammed a backpack full of pills after killing the four people, including the pharmacist, two customers and a teenage clerk.
PHARMACY ROBBERY

Safety

- If robbery occurs, do not resist. Give robber what they ask for.
- Activate alarm/alert police when safe to do so.
- Lock the pharmacy and store when robber leaves.
- Be a good witness, do not attempt to apprehend.