



# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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NSC report: only three states adequately addressing prescription drug abuse  
*Immediate action is needed to curb the leading cause of unintentional injury death  
for Americans ages 25-64*

Itasca, IL – The National Safety Council today released its report, [Prescription Nation: Addressing America's prescription drug abuse epidemic](#) showing 47 states must improve existing standards if they are to reduce the number of deaths involving prescription drug overdoses. NSC is calling on states to take immediate action to improve the prescribing, monitoring, treatment and availability of opioid pain relievers.

Prescription drug abuse is a growing public health epidemic. Forty-five people die every day from overdoses of prescription pain relievers, accounting for more deaths than cocaine and heroin combined. Enough pain killers were prescribed in 2010 to medicate every American adult around the clock for one month.

“For the first time since WWII, something other than motor vehicle crashes is the leading cause of unintentional injury deaths for Americans ages 25-64,” said John Ulczycki, vice president of strategic initiatives at NSC. “Countless lives already have been lost. NSC will be working to confront this issue on a national level.”

In the report, NSC examined state efforts in four areas: state leadership and action, prescription drug monitoring programs, responsible painkiller prescribing and overdose education and prevention programs.

Kentucky, Vermont and Washington were the only states that met standards in all four areas.

Fourteen states – Arizona, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota and Wyoming – failed to meet standards.

Visit [nsc.org/rxreport](http://nsc.org/rxreport) to receive the full report and learn more about solutions to this growing epidemic. NSC also developed an infographic illustrating the scope of the problem. The infographic can be downloaded at [nsc.org/rxnation](http://nsc.org/rxnation).

## **About the National Safety Council**

Founded in 1913 and chartered by Congress, the National Safety Council, [nsc.org](http://nsc.org), is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to save lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the road through leadership, research, education and advocacy. NSC advances this mission by partnering with businesses, government agencies, elected officials and the public in areas where we can make the most impact – distracted driving, teen driving, workplace safety, prescription drug overdoses and Safe Communities. [Safety+Health](#) magazine, the Council's flagship publication, is a leading source of occupational safety and health information.

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