

Pseudoephedrine Electronic Logbooks Begin Sept. 1

Beginning September 1, all pharmacies that sell pseudoephedrine will be required to participate in the state's electronic pseudoephedrine tracking system. This is an important step in stopping persons from going from one store to another to purchase pseudoephedrine, which can then be used to make methamphetamine, a highly addictive drug.

Iowa was successful in obtaining a grant from the federal government so that pharmacies will not have to purchase hardware to implement this program.

Some people wonder if this will mean changes for them when they purchase cold medicine this fall and winter. The answer is that the changes will make it faster for the customer to purchase because the pharmacist will no longer have to be writing the customer's identification information and product being purchased into a logbook. Instead, the information will already be in the electronic warehouse, and the pharmacist will just have to enter your name.

However, the first time a person makes a purchase, the pharmacist will have to manually enter the customer's identification information, and customers will still be required to show identification when purchasing medicine with pseudoephedrine.

Law enforcement will also have access to this warehouse and be able to see if a person, who has already purchased the maximum allowed, tries to purchase more at one or more different pharmacies. Allowing law enforcement to see which persons are repeatedly attempting to purchase more than the allowed limit gives them the information to find the meth dealers and makers.

In 2005, the Legislature passed Senate File 169 which put a limit on how much pseudoephedrine a person could purchase in a thirty-day time period. In 2009, the Legislature adopted legislation that required the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy to establish a real-time electronic warehouse to monitor and control the sale of pseudoephedrine.