Aaron Lipski
Fire Chief

Joshua Parish
Assistant Chief
Sharon Purifoy-Smoots
Assistant Chief
De'Wayne Smoots
Assistant Chief

City of Milwaukee

Fire Department

Contact: Captain L. Williams
Milwaukee Fire Department
Director Community Relations
414-397-8494
Mfd-dir-cr@milwaukee.gov

April 4, 2023

MEDIA ALERT

WHAT: **RECORD NUMBER OF OPIOID OVERDOSES**

WHEN: **TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023 AT 12:30PM**

WHERE: **MFD FIRE STATION #2, 755 NORTH JAMES LOVELL STREET**

WHO:
Police Chief Jeffrey Norman – MPD
Dr. Ben Weston – Medical Director Milwaukee County OEM
Alderwoman JoCasta Zamarripa – COM Aldermanic District #8
Medical Examiner Sara Schreiber – Milwaukee County
Community Programs and Integration Manager Amanda De Leon – Community Medical Services
Interim COM Health Commissioner – Tyler Weber
Executive Director Shakita LaGrant-McClain – Milwaukee County Health and Human Services

DETAILS: There has been a record-breaking number of opioid overdoses in Milwaukee County with 17 deaths reported since Saturday alone, lending to the possibility of a "bad batch." The average age of those affected is 50 years old. Out of the 14 identified addresses, ten were in the City of Milwaukee, one in West Allis, and one in South Milwaukee.

With one death every 16 hours, the overdose epidemic has become a public health crisis. The Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD), West Allis Fire Department, South Milwaukee Fire Department, and all city and county agencies will be urging the community to take note of the dangers of opioid use and to take preventative measures. It is a dangerous time to use, and individuals are encouraged to be aware of the risks associated with opioid use, including fentanyl and other unknown additives.

All community stakeholders advise using fentanyl test strips and having naloxone available, which can reverse an opioid overdose. ***Harm reduction measures, such as these, can save lives***. The MFD has distributed **3,151** Narcan Hope Kits (Narcan/Test Strips) since January 2022, with just over **1,000** of those distributed by field companies during a response to an overdose. Hope kits can be obtained at any Milwaukee fire or police station, or a fire truck you see in the community.

This public health crisis requires immediate action, and it is up to all of us to take steps to prevent further overdoses and deaths.

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