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Wilson sees 2 recent heroin, opioid overdose deaths

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Posted Thursday, August 17, 2017 11:18 pm

By Olivia Neeley | olivia@wilsontimes.com

Law enforcement has seen an uptick in heroin and opioid overdoses, including two deaths in the past two weeks.

Wilson police have seen more than five overdoses in the past several days within the city, prompting officials to warn the community of the drugs' danger.

"Our community has suffered at least two fatal overdoses from heroin/opioid use," Capt. Kendra Howell said. "In the abundance of caution for everyone, it is imperative that we recognize the dangers of this drug and drug usage. The danger of this has always been real. However, the recent overdoses have been alarming."

Howell said officials are currently investigating the overdose deaths.

Authorities are urging everyone to avoid contact with heroin and/or opioids that may be available. Howell said heroin is a highly addictive drug both physically and mentally.

"A one-time experimental use could be at least addictive and the worst - deadly," Howell said. Heroin/opioid-type narcotics can be transdermal (absorbed through the skin) which creates a danger to anyone who touches it."

Howell said police are urging residents not to touch a substance they believe to be heroin. Instead, people should call 911 immediately.

Each Wilson Police Department patrol shift as well as sheriff's deputies are armed with naloxone - a life-saving antidote that reverses opioid overdoses. Howell said police officers have administered naloxone recently.

"We are working diligently to rid our streets of these type of drugs," she said.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Wilson County Sheriff's Office has responded to nine overdose calls within the past three weeks, four of which were heroin-related, four were prescription-related and the remaining one was due to a suicide attempt, according to Wanda Samuel, sheriff's office chief of staff.

She said deputies have not had any fatal overdoses in the county during that period of time.

Sheriff Calvin Woodard said his office has also noticed an increase in heroin use within Wilson County.

"However, we are doing our part in removing drug dealers from our community and providing community resource information to overdose victims and their families," Woodard said. "We as law enforcement can't solve this problem alone, but ask for the families, friends and community to assist us by becoming familiar with the resources that would provide treatment for the abuse victim."

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