

THE OPIOID FILES

Drilling into the DEA's pain pill database

By The Washington Post

Updated Jan. 17, 2020

This page was updated to add data for 2013 and 2014. The two additional years of information were released in 2020 following a ruling by the court in response to challenges by The Washington Post and HD Media.

For the first time, a database maintained by the Drug Enforcement Administration that tracks the path of every single pain pill sold in the United States — by manufacturers and distributors to pharmacies in every town and city — has been made public.

The Washington Post sifted through nearly 500 million transactions from 2006 through 2014 that are detailed in the DEA's database and analyzed shipments of oxycodone and hydrocodone pills, which account for three-quarters of the total opioid pill shipments to pharmacies. The Post is making this data available at the county and state levels in order to help the public understand the impact of years of prescription pill shipments on their communities.

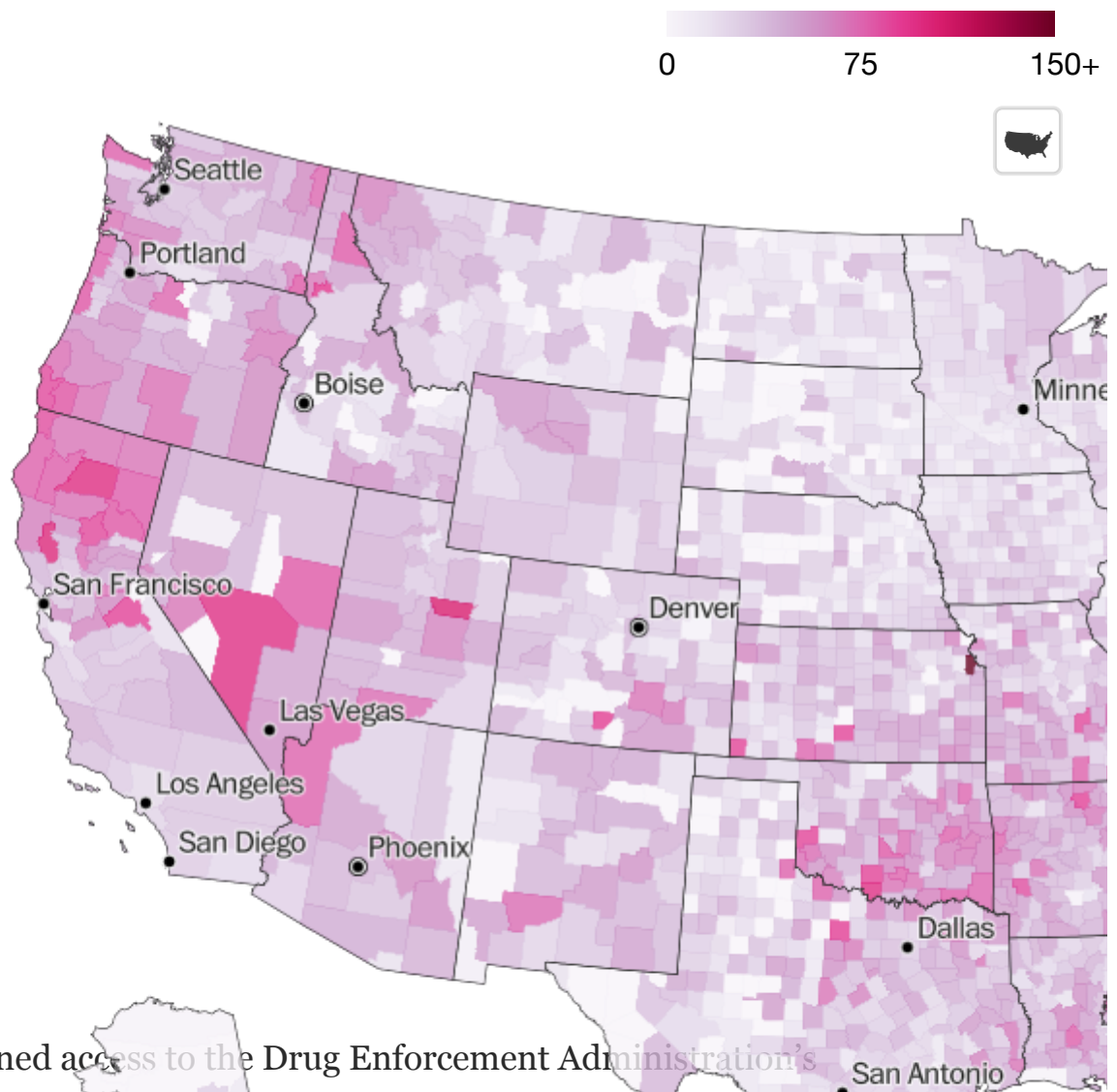
 **Jump to the data for your community**

These records provide an unprecedented look at the surge of legal pain pills that fueled the prescription opioid epidemic, which resulted in nearly 130,000 deaths during the nine-year time frame ending in 2014.

A county-level analysis of the cumulative data shows where the most oxycodone and hydrocodone pills were distributed across the country over that time: more than 100 billion in all.

Number of pills distributed per person, per year

Average yearly total, by county, 2006 through 2014



The Post gained access to the Drug Enforcement Administration's Automation of Reports and Consolidated Orders System, known as ARCOS, as the result of a court order. The Post and HD Media, which publishes the Charleston Gazette-Mail in West Virginia, waged a year-long legal battle for

access to the database, which the government and the drug industry had sought to keep secret.

The version of the database published by The Post allows readers to learn how much hydrocodone and oxycodone went to individual states and counties, and which companies and distributors were responsible.

Find the data for where you live

West Virginia ▼

Mingo County ▼

- From 2006 to 2014 there were **43,247,080** prescription pain pills, enough for **179** pills per person per year, supplied to **Mingo County, W.Va.**
- **12,432,710** of the pills were distributed by **Miami-Luken** and **31,142,920** were manufactured by **Actavis Pharma, Inc.**
- **STROSNIDER, KERMIT** pharmacy received the highest number of pills. [See a map of pharmacies in Mingo County, W.Va.](#)

Distributors

Top five, from 2006 to 2014, in Mingo County, West Virginia.

Miami-Luken

 **12,432,710 pills**

McKesson Corporation

 9,793,810

H. D. Smith

 8,964,730

Cardinal Health

 3,979,150

AmerisourceBergen Drug

 3,701,200

Download distributor data for Mingo County, West Virginia [Get chart as image](#)

Manufacturers

Top five, from 2006 to 2014, in Mingo County, West Virginia.

Actavis Pharma, Inc.

 **31,142,920 pills**

Par Pharmaceutical

 7,026,600

SpecGx LLC

 3,680,600

Purdue Pharma LP

| 266,920

Amneal Pharmaceuticals LLC

| 213,600

Download manufacturer data for Mingo County, West Virginia [Get chart as image](#)

Pharmacies

Top five, from 2006 to 2014, in Mingo County, West Virginia.

STROSNIDER, KERMIT **13,168,350 pills**

HURLEY DRUG COMPANY INC, WILLIAMSON

 9,864,690

TUG VALLEY PHARMACY, LLC, WILLIAMSON

 9,823,650

RIVERSIDE PHARMACY, GILBERT

 2,491,280

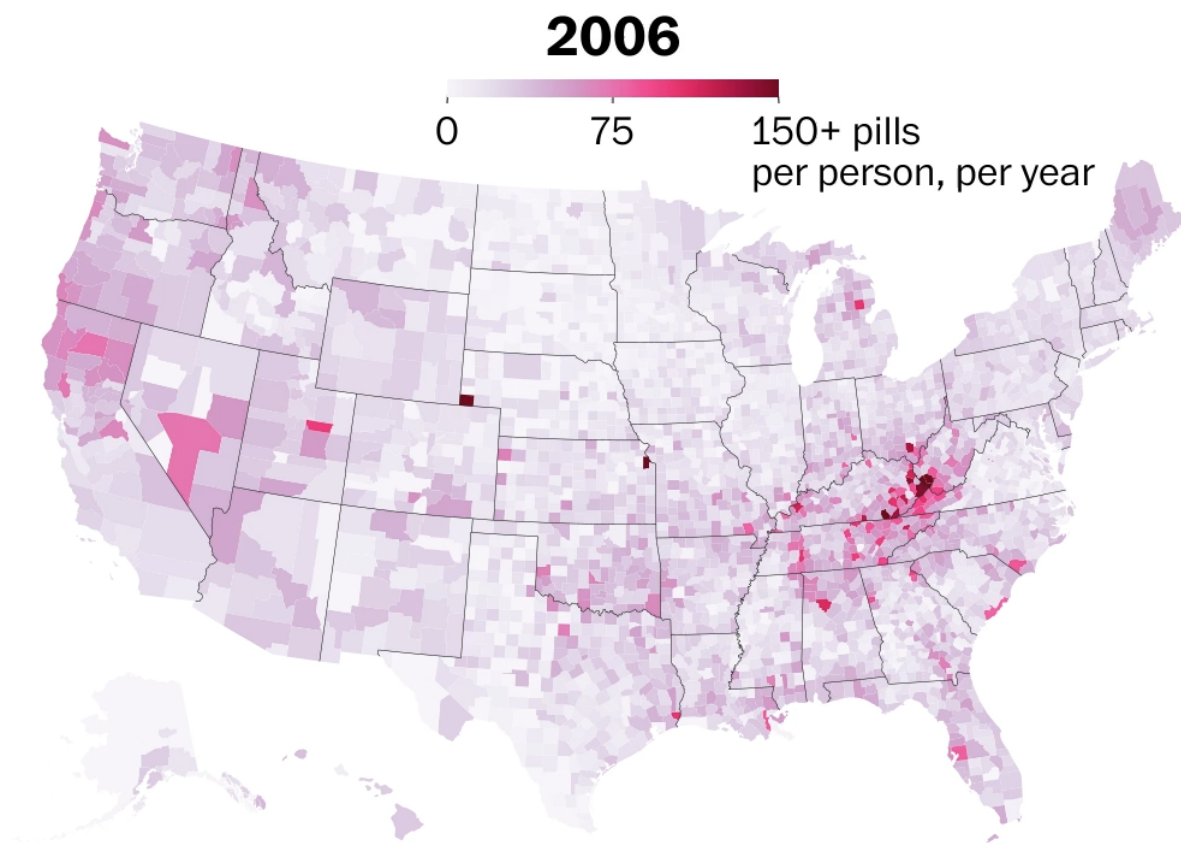
ADKINS PHARMACY INC, GILBERT

 2,365,930**Download pharmacy data for Mingo County, West Virginia** [Get chart as image](#)

The Post believes this is a critically important set of data, which is why we are making it public and accessible to readers and other journalists. We think there are hundreds of stories within this data set and need your help to understand what it means to you and your community. **Want to use this data or our findings in your own work? [Click here to find out how.](#)**

[Download raw data for Mingo County, West Virginia](#)

The Post analysis shows that the volumes of the pills handled by the companies climbed as the epidemic surged, increasing 52 percent from 8.4 billion in 2006 to 12.8 billion in 2011. Pill distribution started to decline slightly in 2012, and the additional data shows that, by 2014, the number of pills distributed was 11.8 billion. Yearly county-level maps show how the influx of pills spread.



Just six companies distributed 76 percent of the pills — oxycodone and hydrocodone — during this period: McKesson Corp., Walgreens, Cardinal Health, AmerisourceBergen, CVS and Walmart, according to an analysis of the database by The Washington Post.

Top pill distributors, 2006 through 2014

👉 Click on a column to sort the table.

DISTRIBUTOR		PERCENT OF MARKET ▼
McKesson Corp.	19 billion pills	18.9%
Cardinal Health	15 billion pills	14.7%
Walgreens	15 billion pills	14.5%
AmerisourceBergen	13 billion pills	13.2%
CVS	7.7 billion pills	7.6%
Walmart	7.1 billion pills	7.1%

DISTRIBUTOR		PERCENT OF MARKET ▼
Smith Drug Co.	1.7 billion pills	1.7%
Rite Aid	1.6 billion pills	1.6%
Kroger	1.6 billion pills	1.6%
H. D. Smith	1.4 billion pills	1.4%

Expand to see top 100

[\[Distributors, pharmacies and manufacturers respond to previously unreleased DEA data about opioid sales\]](#)

Three companies manufactured about 85 percent of the opioids: SpecGx, a subsidiary of Mallinckrodt; Actavis Pharma; and Par Pharmaceutical, a subsidiary of Endo Pharmaceuticals.

Top pill manufacturers, 2006 through 2014

👉 Click on a column to sort the table.

LABELER		PERCENT OF MARKET ▼
SpecGx	36 billion pills	35.7%
Actavis Pharma	32 billion pills	32.0%
Par Pharmaceutical	18 billion pills	17.6%
Amneal Pharmaceuticals	4.0 billion pills	4.0%
Purdue Pharma	3.2 billion pills	3.2%
KVK Tech	1.7 billion pills	1.7%
Teva Pharmaceuticals USA	720 million pills	0.7%
Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Inc.	710 million pills	0.7%
Kaiser Foundation Hospitals	480 million pills	0.5%

West-Ward Pharmaceuticals

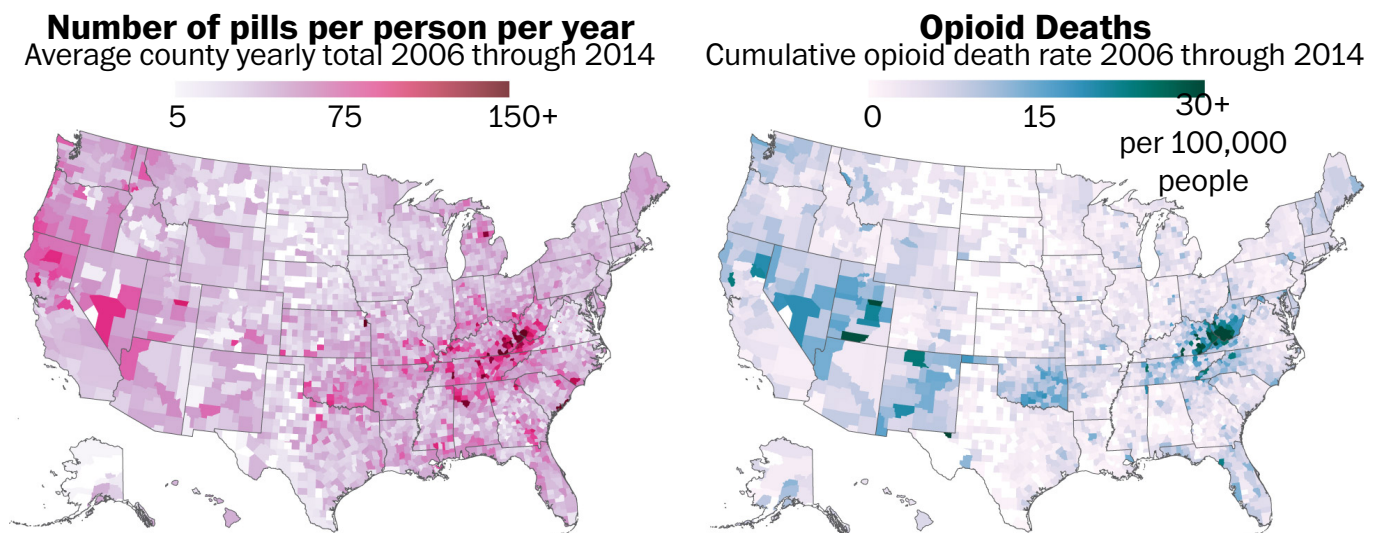
470 million pills

0.5%

[Expand to see top 25](#)

Comparing county-level maps of opioid overdose deaths and pill shipments reveal a virtual opioid belt of more than 90 counties stretching southwest from Webster County, W.Va., through southern Virginia and ending in Monroe County, Ky. This swath includes 18 of the top 20 counties ranked by per-capita prescription opioid deaths nationwide and 12 of the top 20 counties for opioid pills distributed per capita.

[\[Have opioids affected your community? Share your story.\]](#)



Source: Data compiled by the DEA and CDC and analyzed by The Post

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About this story

The Washington Post analyzed data from the Drug Enforcement Administration's Automation of Reports and Consolidated Orders System, known as ARCOS, from 2006 to 2014.

Data analyzed includes only shipments from sales of oxycodone and hydrocodone pills to retail pharmacies, chain pharmacies and practitioners. The entire database tracks a dozen different opioids, including oxycodone and hydrocodone, which make up three-quarters of the total pill shipments to pharmacies.

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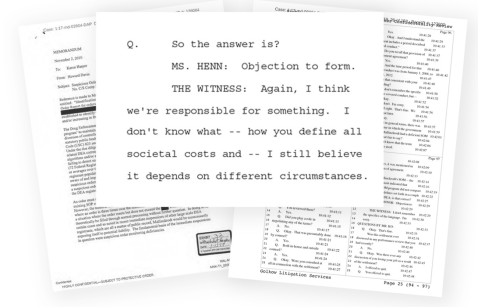


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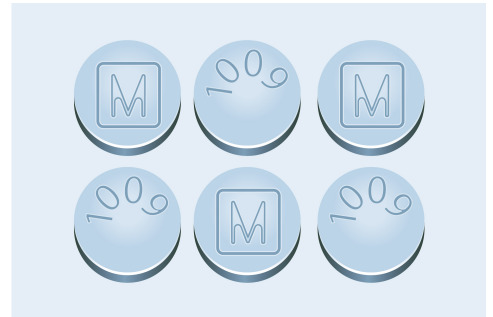
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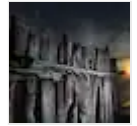
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