[https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/investigations/dea-pain-pill-database/?utm\_term=.0fc9c6083840#download-resources](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/investigations/dea-pain-pill-database/?utm_term=.0fc9c6083840" \l "download-resources)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/2019/07/18/how-download-use-dea-pain-pills-database/?utm_term=.25187f012871>

Back in July, a database maintained by the DEA that tracks the path of every single pain pill sold in the United States was made public. The Post gained access to the DEA’s Administration’s Automation of Reports and Consolidated Orders System (ARCOS) as the result of a court order after a year-long legal battle for access to the database, which the government and the drug industry want to keep secret.

There are roughly 380 million transactions from 2006 through 2012 that are detailed in the database. These shipments of oxycodone and hydrocodone pills account for three-quarters of the total opioid pill shipments to pharmacies. The Washington Post made this data available to help the public understand the impact of years of prescription pill shipments on our communities.

They cleaned the data to include only information on shipments of oxycodone and hydrocodone pills. Data on 10 other opioids was not included because they were shipped in much lower quantities. The Post also removed shipments that did not wind up in the hands of consumers, such as shipments from distributors to themselves.

We don’t have more recent data because the DEA only produced data from 2006 through 2014 in the case. 2013 and 2014 data exists, but access is not yet available because of the ongoing court Ohio. The Post is still fighting for its release.

Data on opioid overdose deaths was extracted from the CDC’s WONDER (Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research) online database, which utilizes an ad-hoc query system for the analysis of public health data.