

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Ronni Katz

PHONE: 756-8116

EMAIL: rmk@portlandmaine.gov

August 31st is Overdose Awareness Day. Learn the signs of an overdose and “Save a Life”

The Overdose Prevention Project, a program of the City of Portland’s Health and Human Services Department, Public Health Division, will commemorate International Overdose Awareness Day on Tuesday, August 31 in memory of those who have lost their lives as a result of a drug overdose. “Fatal overdoses have continued to stay high and have surpassed traffic deaths in Maine more than once in recent years,” says Ronni Katz, Substance Abuse Prevention Program Coordinator. “Most overdose victims can be saved by calling 911, but people are afraid of getting into trouble if they call,” Katz added. “Statistics show that few arrests result after making the call and most importantly, lives are saved. “

The Overdose Prevention Project was started by the Public Health Division in 2003 as a response to the record number of fatal overdoses in Portland. Since then, Portland has seen a consistent decline in fatal overdoses. The OPP raises awareness about the signs of an overdose:

- Not Breathing
- Turing Blue
- Not Responding
- Snoring Deeply

People can write something about someone they lost to an overdose on our Facebook page at:

<http://www.facebook.com/portlandprevention>

In addition, there will be posts about addiction and recovery on our Facebook page and on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/portprevent>). More information about the Overdose Prevention Project and Portland Public Health’s other substance abuse prevention programs can be found at:

<http://substanceabuse.portlandmaine.gov/>

People are urged to call 911 if someone exhibits any of the warning signs of an overdose, even if you are not sure. Why let a life-threatening situation become a life-ending situation?