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Biggest ever one-day gun buyback in N.J. nets more than 2K firearms

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New Jersey law enforcement collected more than 2,800 firearms Saturday at buyback events around the state, which officials estimated was their largest ever single-day haul.

Residents were paid more than \$400,000 for nearly 1,200 handguns, about 1,200 rifles and shotguns and 29 firearms police categorized as “assault weapons,” among others.

“Like any preventative measure, we’ll never know exactly how many lives were saved as a result of this effort,” acting Attorney General Andrew Bruck said Thursday during a press conference at the National Guard Armory in Lawrenceville. “But I have no doubt in my mind that lives were saved.”

Buybacks have been held off and on in recent years, with some guns even being turned into jewelry. During two days in 2017, New Jersey collected more than 4,770.

The events have become part of the state’s expanded efforts to combat increased shootings.

On Saturday, nine county prosecutors helped host buybacks at ten locations: Englewood, Camden, Bridgeton, Trenton, Somerset, Asbury Park, Carneys Point, Elizabeth, Plainfield and Westfield.

Residents could turn in up to three weapons, “no questions asked,” according to a press release.

“Those guns will never make it to the streets or fall into the hands of a child because of the outstanding team effort,” acting Camden County Prosecutor Jill Mayer said in a statement.

Inoperable firearms and pellet guns earned \$25, rifles and shotguns were worth \$125, handguns \$200 and assault weapons \$250.

That resulting \$406,575 payout mainly came from forfeiture dollars previously seized by local cops and prosecutors, officials said.

More was spent on handguns — nearly \$240,000 — than any other type of firearm.

The guns will eventually be melted down.

Questions about the buybacks can be directed to the attorney general’s Office of Constituent Services at 609-984-5828 or www.njoag.gov/gunbuyback.