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Sodium Thiopental Issue Continues

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A Swiss pharmaceutical company has issued a voluntary recall of a lethal injection drug held by Nebraska. But the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says it won't enforce the decision.

Naari AG asked Nebraska officials to quarantine its supply of sodium thiopental and return it to the company or the FDA. The company said in a recall letter that the product was "illegally diverted from the company's supply chain."

Nebraska officials say they obtained the supply in a legitimate manner and will not return it.

Sodium thiopental has been in short supply since 2010, when the only U.S. manufacturer, Hospira Incorporated, ended production because of death penalty opposition from overseas customers.

Then, the European Union banned the export of sodium thiopental, further diminishing its availability as a lethal injection drug.

Michael Ryan, sentenced to death in Richardson County District Court for murders at a farm north of Rulo in the 1980's has filed an appeal because of the states intent to use sodium thiopental in his execution.

Associated Press