



## Combating Counterfeit Drugs

On Feb. 18, 2004, FDA issued a final [report](#) that identifies ways to combat the growing public health problem of counterfeit prescription drugs in the United States. Counterfeit drugs are not only illegal but are also inherently unsafe.

The report is the outcome of an initiative launched in July 2003, when a task force was formed to identify steps FDA, other government agencies and the private sector could take to minimize the risks to the public from counterfeit drugs. The task force consulted with security experts, federal and state law enforcement officials, technology developers, manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, consumer groups, and the general public. In October 2003, the task force issued an [interim report](#) that was followed by a public meeting and technology forum.

The final report describes steps to protect against counterfeit drugs in the years ahead, and identifies specific steps needed now to secure the U.S. drug distribution system.