

Pfizer Forbids Sales of Drugs For Lethal Injection

The American pharmaceutical company Pfizer has said it will no longer sell drugs that can be used for lethal injections to the American government. A total of 7 substances on the list are mostly used for operations and certain illnesses but are also in liquids used for executions. According to a Pfizer representative, the company's aim is to save lives and not help kill people.

Pfizer says it will closely monitor buyers who try to resell the drugs to state institutions, which may use them for executions.

After Pfizer's decision, there are no more companies in the USA and Europe that sell lethal injection drugs to the American government. The European Union has banned the export of such drugs to the US.

As a result, state authorities are trying to find new drugs and combinations of substances that can be used for executions. Normally, three mixtures of drugs are used to execute a prisoner. The first one makes you unconscious, the second liquid paralyses the muscles and the third stops the heart from beating.

In the past few years, the number of executions has decreased, in part due to the availability of lethal drugs. Last year only 28 executions were carried out in the US. Among the 32 states that allow capital punishment, all of them use lethal injections as the main method of execution but some allow the electric chair, hanging, the firing squad and the gas chamber as alternatives.

Human rights organizations and other groups opposed to capital punishment have welcomed Pfizer's decision as a bold move to ban the death penalty in the United States.

Source: <http://news.english-online.at>

Vocabulary

capital punishment = to officially kill a person who has committed a crime

execution = the official killing of a person by the state

bold move = action that shows a lot of courage

firing squad = group of people who are ordered to shoot and kill a prisoner

lethal injection = a drug that is injected into your blood stream; it is used to execute people who have committed certain crimes

You can see the whole lesson from your teacher, please ask them to send it to you before the class.

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