

Methamphetamine

Florida Office of Drug Control Responding to Meth Activity

Preventing Meth:

Effective prevention begins with an assessment of the specific nature of the drug problem within the community and adapting the program accordingly. This could be assessed by looking at the variety of indicators including drug treatment and emergency room admissions.

In general, prevention programs should start early, be comprehensive and repetitively stress key points.

Family-focused prevention efforts have been found to have a greater impact than strategies that focus on parents only or children/adolescents only.

The general prevention principles established in NIDA's research-based booklet entitled "Preventing Drug Use Among children and Adolescents" hold for all drugs of abuse, including methamphetamine, and serve as a good starting point for establishing programs in your community. (call 1-800-729-6686 for a free copy).

Do You See Meth Activity in your Neighborhood?

The police cannot solve the methamphetamine problem by themselves. Success requires community involvement. It may be difficult to be certain that you are seeing drug activity, so look for patterns of behaviors rather than one-time events. It is important to distinguish between peculiar behavior and drug activity. Racial or ethnic background, economic status, and lifestyle choices do not indicate that the person is a drug dealer.

If you see any of the listed behaviors, don't assume the police already know or that a neighbor will call. Don't assume one report is all that is needed. If the activity keeps occurring, keep reporting it. If the pattern changes, report that change. All neighbors affected by the drug activity are encouraged to report.

Signs of a potential Meth lab include:

- Covered or blacked-out windows, shades or blinds constantly drawn even though people live there
- Unusual traffic activities such as excessive night traffic or a lot of visitors who stay for a short time
- Sweet, bitter, ammonia or solvent smells from chemicals
- Burn pits, stained soil or dead vegetation where chemicals have been dumped
- Security measures such as cameras or baby monitors outside of buildings
- Chemical staining on walls and floors
- People who have no visible means of support, but make cash purchases
- Trash dumped such as: rags with red/yellow stains; large quantities of packaging from ephedrine or pseudo ephedrine cold, diet or allergy pills; camp stove fuel containers; packaging from Epsom salts or rock salt;

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Pyrex/glass containers with dried chemical deposits; bottles connected with rubber hosing and duct tape; coolers, thermos bottles and storage containers; coffee filters, pillow cases or bed sheets stained red or containing a white powdery residue

Take Action!

If you suspect a meth lab, leave at once and report it. Do not try to enter the lab or handle any of the containers because meth lab chemicals can burn your eyes and skin, and breathing the fumes can cause severe respiratory damage. Active meth labs can easily catch on fire and explode, destroying surrounding property.

If you think you see Methamphetamine activity, report the problem to the police. Depending on the urgency of the situation, you can either call 911 or the non-emergency line. Sometimes drug houses can be shut down through code enforcement since they commonly have code violations. If the house in question is a rental property, contact the landlord. He or she may be able to evict the tenant.



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Visit the Stop Meth in Florida Web site at
www.stopmethinflorida.org