



District Health Department #10



## REPORT TO THE BOARDS OF HEALTH

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Mid-Michigan District Health Department, Wednesday, June 22, 2016  
Central Michigan District Health Department, Wednesday, June 22, 2016  
District Health Department #10, Friday, June 24, 2016

### Methamphetamines

Methamphetamines, also referred to as crystal meth, crank, chalk, ice, go, pep pills, speed, uppers, zip, among other names, is a powerful synthesized stimulant that can be snorted, smoked, injected or, less commonly, taken orally. The effects are extremely pleasurable making it very highly addictive.

A Google search of the term “recipe for meth” retrieved about 528,000 results in 0.57 seconds. This, along with several household chemicals and a place to “cook,” or produce it, is all a person needs to manufacture meth. Limiting access to one of the ingredients, pseudoephedrine, in 2004 initially seemed to impact production. However, the number of labs identified has steadily risen since its low in 2007 and the number is now nearly twice as high as it was in 2004. The increase is thought to be due to both new, smaller scale production techniques and a process called smurfing: recruiting several individuals and sending them to multiple stores to purchase the legally allowable limit of pseudoephedrine then combining it all together. (*It is reportedly called smurfing because it is comparable to the Smurfs each going out to pick smurfberries then bringing them back and combining them together for all to share.*)

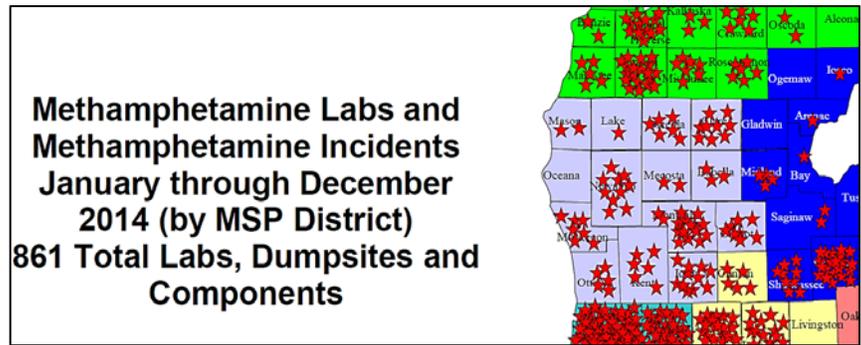
Methamphetamines create a unique public health risk. Its production in an uncontrolled environment using unsophisticated methods and improper disposal of waste leads to multiple health and safety hazards. For every pound of meth produced, seven pounds of toxic waste is created. By-products created during the production of meth that are known risks to humans include phosphine gas, hydrogen chloride gas, iodine vapors, ammonia vapors, hydrogen chlorine gas, highly reactive lithium metal, acetone, benzene, ephedrine, ethyl ether, Freon, hydrochloric acid, iodine, isopropanol, lithium, methanol, phosphine gas, phosphoric acid, red phosphorus, sodium, sodium hydroxide, and toluene. The effects of these chemicals range from irritation to skin and eyes to explosions and death upon inhalation.

The current trend in meth production has been the “one-pot” method which is much easier than classic, large scale lab models. However, this method poses increased possibility of explosion or fire and has led to a proliferation of toxic trash in parks, forests, along roadsides and other unexpected places. The ingredients are combined in a plastic bottle and “burped” as needed (opening the top a little to let pressure out so it won’t explode) unless it is vented in another way. This bottle may be kept in a car, backpack, house, shed or deep in the woods. Signs of a one-pot cook site include:

- Plastic pop/juice/water bottles, possibly with tubing coming out of the top.
- Propane cylinders (typical of gas grills) used to transport anhydrous ammonia.
- Coffee filters with red stains/powder or white residue.
- Empty medicine boxes and blister packs for over the counter (products that contain pseudoephedrine).
- Lithium batteries that appear to be unrolled.
- Bags containing a reddish/white powder.
- Respirator masks.
- Rubber gloves.
- Plastic or rubber tubing, hoses, and clamps.
- Pyrex glass, Corning ware, or other glass cookware.
- Bed sheets or pillow cases stained red or containing a white powdery residue.
- Engine starting fluid cans (punctured and drained of ethyl ether).
- Empty drain cleaner containers (lye).
- Kitty litter.
- Empty bottles of ‘rubbing’ alcohol, acetone, toluene, or paint thinner.
- Empty cans of Coleman/Camping fuel (naphtha).

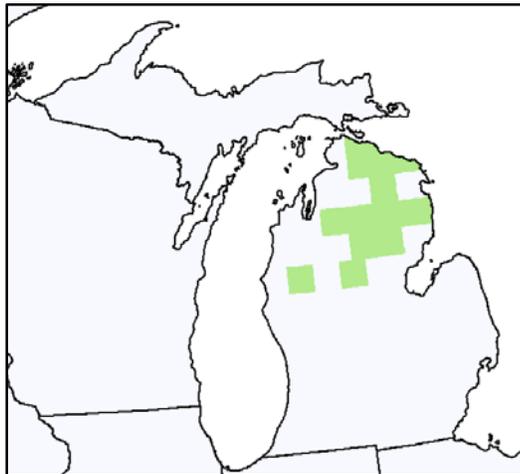
- Empty containers of sulfuric, muriatic, or phosphoric acid.

If any of these items are found, **NEVER TOUCH THEM** as they are highly toxic. Note the location and call the **Michigan State Police Methamphetamine Investigation Team at 1-866-METH-TIP (1-866-638-4847).**



**County-level Vulnerability Assessment for Rapid Dissemination of HIV or HCV Infections**

UPDATE: We were notified on June 1<sup>st</sup> that the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s manuscript “County-level Vulnerability Assessment for Rapid Dissemination of HIV or HCV Infections among Persons who Inject Drugs (PWID) United States” was accepted for publication in the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes (JAIDS) and is available online [on their website](#). Out of 220 counties identified to be in the top 5% of vulnerability of HIV or HCV “outbreak” in the U.S., 11 were located in Michigan. It is estimated 1.9% of the population of Michigan is at risk.



County	Ranking out of 220
<b>Clare</b>	87
<b>Roscommon</b>	192
<b>Lake</b>	137
<b>Crawford</b>	197
<b>Kalkaska</b>	207
Ogemaw	86
Alcona	184
Oscoda	88
Montmorency	91
Presque Isle	174
Cheboygan	215

**Suggested Recommendations of the Boards of Health**

1. Encourage public awareness of the signs and hazards of meth waste. Example of a [public information flier](#) can be found [on Maine's website](#).
2. Encourage increased awareness of retailers of methamphetamine production and which precursor chemicals are diverted from legal products. This can help curtail theft and suspicious sales of these commodities and improve co-operation and teamwork between retailers and law enforcement. [The Meth Watch Program](#) is an existing program that includes online training and printed materials to aid in this goal.
3. Continue efforts to curtail intravenous drug use and increase prevention and screening for hepatitis and HIV.

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