

The *Learn More* Series is distributed by the Rural Methamphetamine Education Project (RMEP).

The RMEP is directed by the Rural Crime and Justice Center (RCJC), a Center for Excellence located at Minot State University.

The primary goal of the RMEP is to develop and deliver a public awareness and education campaign to children, schools, teachers, parents, and communities.

The RMEP offers methamphetamine specific presentations, booth displays, brochures, and other resources FREE of charge to schools, businesses, agencies, community organizations, and individuals.

To utilize the RMEP resources, to schedule a presentation or to simply *Learn More*, contact:

Rural Crime and Justice Center  
Minot State University  
500 University Avenue West  
Minot, ND 58707

1-800-777-0750 ext. 3440  
or 1-701-858-3440  
Fax: 1-701-858-3460

Email: [rcjc@minotstateu.edu](mailto:rcjc@minotstateu.edu)  
[www.minotstateu.edu/rcjc](http://www.minotstateu.edu/rcjc)

## Environmental Impact of Meth

Methamphetamine distinguishes itself as an illicit drug that not only poses a direct threat to the user, but also to the environment. Environmental contamination is often associated with production, which is suggested to yield the highest levels of contamination as a result of the manufacturing process and improper waste disposal. Smoking meth, however, can also raise contamination concern.

Fortunately, methamphetamine lab activity has decreased in North Dakota, reducing the level of contamination concern associated with production. Lab seizures peaked at 297 in 2003 and have since descended annually. In 2006, 43 labs were reportedly seized. The drug, however, remains in our state. As lab activity declines and demand continues to exist, traffickers seize the opportunity to deliver the drug from superlabs outside of the state. To illustrate the continued existence of meth in ND, reported drug seizures yielded 1.6 kg of meth in 2003. The number dropped in 2004, but radically multiplied to 6.7 kg seized in 2006.

Environments at risk for contamination include indoor and outdoor areas. Indoor contamination can affect any porous surface in the vicinity including plaster, wood, and upholstery. Examples of potentially affected areas include drapes, blinds, appliances, light fixtures, fans, plumbing fixtures, vents, clothing, and toys. Indoor contamination may be identified by abnormal staining or discoloration. Outdoor contamination can affect soil, surface water, groundwater, and sewer systems. Potential outdoor contamination may be identified by burn piles, dead vegetation, and buried trash piles.

As an attempt to better understand methamphetamine contamination, the National Jewish Medical and Research Center facilitated a series of controlled cooks. Among other findings, the research group determined that individuals inside a building during a cook should be considered contaminated, personnel entering a lab should wear self contained breathing apparatuses and full skin protection, and everything removed from the lab should be decontaminated.

Currently, no federal laws exist to ensure that labs are properly cleaned. However, contamination can be managed through effective remediation procedures. Best practices for cleanups in North Dakota address the following categories: 1) Ventilation of the structure throughout cleanup. 2) Chemical remnants and spills. 3) Porous materials and household furnishings. 4) Plumbing and ventilation systems. 5) Floors, walls, and ceilings. 6) Repainting. 7) Final ventilation for at least three days.

As a general rule, if you suspect lab activity, contact law enforcement immediately.

## RESOURCES

### Helpful Links

<http://www.colodec.org/medandresearch/documents/Meth%20smoking%20experiment.pdf>  
<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/pubs/states/northdakota.html>  
<http://www.nationaldec.org/EvidenceBasedPrac&Rsrch/research/Ammonia%20Meth%20Report.pdf>  
<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h110-365>  
<http://www.ndhealth.gov/wm/drug%20labs/BestManagementPracticesForCleanupsAtMethamphetamineLabs.pdf>  
<http://www.mapps.org/Test%20Kit.htm>