

METHAMPHETAMINES

The Health Department now plays a role in the arena of illegal narcotics, specifically in the rehabilitation of methamphetamine labs. Recently, the manufacture of methamphetamine has become more and more common locally. Methamphetamine, also known as meth, crank, chalk, L.A., ice, crystal, and quartz can be produced in residential settings. There are several different recipes for producing methamphetamines. Some ingredients may include: pseudophedrine, red phosphorus, drain cleaner, battery acid, antifreeze, metals, and anhydrous ammonia. Following a drug bust the bulk chemicals are removed by law enforcement, but the residue from production remains. The Health Department must ensure that future occupants are not exposed to these remaining hazardous chemicals.



Chemical contaminants may remain in a home in varied quantities, depending upon the chemicals used, the quantity made, its handling during production, and ventilation. Residues are most commonly found on carpets, walls, and other surfaces, as well as, drains, sinks, and the ventilation system. In more rural areas the byproducts can also be found in the septic tanks, and leach fields. The health affects on future occupants of a structure used for the production of meth can include: throat irritation, respiratory difficulties, and headache. Chronic exposure can lead to gastrointestinal problems, visual-speech disorders, and even chromosomal damage. Again, dependent upon the chemicals used, the Health Department orders various degrees of testing, so that the type and extent of clean-up can be determined. The owner is then ordered to clean-up the interior of the structure, and may also be required to conduct post clean-up testing.

For more information on Methamphetamines, visit the stark county sheriff's web site at <http://www.starkcountyohio.gov/sheriff/resources/narcotics-unit/methamphetamine-awareness>

The Stark County Health Department is not an immediate responder to suspected meth labs. If you suspect a meth lab in your area, contact the Stark County Sheriff at 330-430-3800.

