

## “Meth – dangerous for both user and the innocent public”

Methamphetamine has been a problem in the Midwest for the past several years. Recently, the meth problem has been felt closer to home. During the past month, the Dodge County Multi-Jurisdictional Drug Task Force has investigated two separate meth labs in the Randolph area. The information that leads authorities to these labs came from citizens that called the sheriff's dept. with information. The investigations have been extremely successful due to the excellent knowledge and dedication of the individuals that responded, including local law enforcement, EMS, fire, and state agents. Due to their professionalism there were no injuries to residents of the community or environment.

Meth labs are extremely dangerous to both the citizens of Dodge County and the environment that we all enjoy. The chemicals that are used to produce Meth are common household chemicals. “Meth cooks”, as they are called, mix these common products together to make the illegal and volatile drug. When these chemicals are cooked or mixed together a lethal chemical reaction occurs. If these chemicals are improperly mixed or cooked in the wrong order they could cause a major catastrophe. Meth labs can be just about anywhere, in apartments, houses, cars, barns or anywhere else that they feel safe.

As citizen's, we all should be aware of some common products use to cook Meth. Meth can be made from the following toxic chemicals and common household products -Battery acid, Drain cleaner, Lye, Antifreeze, Cold medication with pseudo ephedrine, paint thinner, lighter fluid, rubbing alcohol, various salts, brake cleaner, ether (starting fluid), aluminum pie plates, jars or other containers with tubes sticking out the top. Coffee filters, glass dishes or plates.

If you see any of these chemicals or products together and in an area that is uncommon to them, do not attempt to remove them on your own. Call the Dodge County Sheriff's Dept.; they will contact the proper clean-up personnel if it indeed is a discarded meth lab or remnants of a lab. When these labs are found the clean-up cost is extremely expensive. The lab by-products must be removed by licensed companies. When we are confronted with a lab we call in the state meth lab team and they dismantle the lab and coordinate removal of the toxic products.

Community awareness is very important in keeping Meth labs in check. As citizens of Dodge County we can all help. If you are a landlord or apartment manager you need to listen to other tenants who complain of a bad odor or unusual amounts of traffic in a certain area. As employees or employers who work in an industry that sells any of the above ingredients you need to take notice of people who buy these products in excess. Be cautious of not only the products used in the “cooking”, but also of the by product that is left behind after the “cooking is done. If we all work together to look for the telltale signs of a Meth lab, we will be able to make it difficult for the Meth cooks to set up “shop” in Dodge County.

If anyone observes any of the above signs, or has information about a lab or a suspicious person call the Dodge County Sheriff's Dept. Do not attempt to investigate on your own. Both the people and chemicals involved in the labs can be extremely dangerous. Personnel within the Dodge County Sheriff's Dept. have the proper training to handle the situations. Credit for the contents of this column goes to Dodge County Patrolman Kevin Day. Thanks for listening

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