WALK YOUR LAND

The Extension Agent’s Guide

For

Protection of Private Property

Against

Unauthorized Clandestine Methamphetamine Production
Acknowledgements

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This guide is adapted from the *Meth-free Montana* manual and is the result of Cooperative Extension Quick Response Teams formed in the Eastern and Western Regions of Kentucky.

This manual is intended for educational purposes to enhance the personal and environmental safety of Kentucky residents and their land. This is not intended to be a law enforcement tool.
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I. Introduction

Kentucky was once free of clandestine methamphetamine production — it can be again.

*Walk Your Land* brings Kentucky residents, law enforcement officers, and prevention and treatment professionals together in a network of community partnerships that work to prevent the use and production of methamphetamine. *Walk Your Land* is a community initiative started by the University of Kentucky, Cooperative Extension Program, Health Education through Extension Leadership, Kentucky State Police, Operation UNITE, and Pennyrile Narcotics Task Force. The goal is to raise awareness and to find innovative ways to stem the use and production of methamphetamine in our state. The purpose of this guide is to include you in the process. Every Kentuckian has a role to play.

Whether you are a teacher, pharmacist, parent, farmer, landowner, or simply a concerned Kentucky citizen, this guide will show you how to recognize signs of methamphetamine use and how to spot signs of a clandestine methamphetamine lab. It will teach you to be the eyes and ears of your community, as well as how to use your voice to include other community members and local leaders in the effort to protect Kentucky land from the effects of clandestine methamphetamine production.

Specific information for health care providers, social workers, teachers, faith-based community, farmers, landlords and real estate agents, law enforcement personnel, first responders, and retailers is available at [www.ca.uky.edu/heel/](http://www.ca.uky.edu/heel/).

Objectives:

1. To encourage farmers, absentee landlords, rental property owners, property managers, hotel and motel owners and operators, storage unit owners and operators, and other people who have access to property to regularly examine their properties with an eye toward the discovery of materials and signs of methamphetamine production.

2. To make property owners aware of what to look for that might indicate clandestine methamphetamine production.

3. To encourage property owners to react safely and to report the discovery of possible methamphetamine waste to the proper authorities.

4. To encourage cooperation between property owners, local law enforcement, and other state authorities to ensure the proper disposal of materials and cleanup of production sites.

5. To make property owners aware of the health and environmental hazards associated with failure to report methamphetamine waste for proper removal.

6. To support efforts of property owners to secure assistance for removal of methamphetamine waste on farm land.

7. To make property owners aware of the dangers involved in the unlawful disposal or burial of methamphetamine production materials and/or waste on their land.

8. To create greater community methamphetamine awareness and associated environmental and health risks.
Why should I get involved?
Methamphetamine production undermines the safety of our communities, bringing violent crime, child abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, disease, death, theft, and environmental pollution with it. It contaminates the bodies of the people who take it, puts children at risk and pollutes the air around us, the water we drink and the buildings in which we live. The toxic and explosive nature of meth labs puts police and firefighters—the very people charged with keeping us safe—in danger for which they are unprepared. Tenants on past meth production sites, which are contaminated, are also at risk.

Methamphetamine is an extremely dangerous and highly addictive drug. It is used by teenagers, parents, truck drivers, athletes, by older people, and young professionals. This drug, unlike others, affects more than just the users. Children exposed to methamphetamine production and use, suffer physical harm and neglect. Communities suffer the loss of productive citizens, strain on the local economy, and the loss of a community that is free from crime, drugs, and violence.

Methamphetamine is produced in apartment buildings, trailer parks, hotel rooms, storage sheds, national forests, state parks, and the trunks of cars. Producers often “cook” this drug on farmland or property that belongs to farmers or absent landowners. Some clandestine methamphetamine producers have been known to offer honest farmers money for use of their land to decrease the risk of being reported. This results in an honest farmer being manipulated into participating in this environmentally hazardous process, not to mention a crime. You may unknowingly encounter people who are using or making meth on a daily basis. Think of scenes like these that are played out every day.

- You work in a convenience store or pharmacy. A group of teen-agers comes in to buy several packages of cold medicine although there’s not a sniffle among them. You think they might be buying ingredients to make meth --- what should you do?

- Your daughter (or niece, or children’s baby sitter) quickly drops a worrisome amount of weight. She seems nervous and agitated, as if she might be taking meth to lose weight. Where do you find help?

- You are hunting on public land when you come across a pile of discarded glassware, tubing and thermal containers. It could be the remnants of a meth lab. Who should you call?

- You are walking your land and notice soda bottles and tubing in the stream where your cattle drink. Where do you report your findings?

This guide will teach you about the signs of meth use and production and what to do when you come across them. It will also educate you and give you the tools to educate others on the devastating effects of methamphetamine, which reach far beyond the people who use it. Although most of us in Kentucky may never encounter meth directly, it affects us all.
Isn’t this a job for law enforcement and prevention professionals?

As you will soon learn, methamphetamine is a drug that can be produced in small batches in makeshift, local laboratories. It is not a substance that needs to be imported or one that is produced and controlled solely by large drug rings. For this reason, meth often flies below the law enforcement radar. Police cannot be on every street corner in every town, which is why it is important for individuals like you to learn to become the stewards of your own communities.

Law enforcement needs our help to effectively protect the public. The problem of methamphetamine production in Kentucky is too large for one group to handle alone.

II. What is methamphetamine?

Methamphetamine is a central nervous system stimulant that releases high levels of the neurotransmitter dopamine in its users. It is highly addictive and extremely hard to stop using. Meth is manufactured from a variety of chemical ingredients that are readily available in most communities. Its production requires chemicals such as anhydrous ammonia, ammonium nitrate, and iodine, which may be stolen from farms and ranches or bought in large quantities from local agricultural businesses, and ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, which is found in many over-the-counter cold medicines.

What does methamphetamine look like?

Methamphetamine, also known as meth, speed, poor-man’s cocaine, chalk, crank or fire, is an odorless, bitter-tasting, crystalline powder that is easily dissolved in alcohol or water. It is usually white, with a pink or yellow tinge. Another form of methamphetamine comes in clear, chunky crystals that look like rock candy. Street names for this type of meth include ice, crystal, or glass. The appearance of this drug varies widely depending on a variety of factors.

Who uses methamphetamine?

Meth is cheap, readily available, and highly addictive. Some statistics report that 98% of people who use the drug will become addicted to it. Traditionally associated with white, male, blue collar workers, methamphetamine is now being used by diverse groups in all regions of the country. It is used by people of all classes, professions, and economic backgrounds. Meth use does not look the same everywhere; it may be used by an entirely different group in every town and community: from truck drivers wanting to drive all night, to single mothers needing energy to work and raise their kids, to athletes looking for a boost, to young girls trying to stay thin. The drug has broad appeal and is used in all segments of our society.
The Kentucky Cabinet of Justice and Kentucky law enforcement officials now consider methamphetamine use to be our state’s most serious and costly drug problem. Kentucky State Police statistics report 498 methamphetamine labs being raided or closed down in Kentucky in 2003 alone. The numbers are expected to continue to rise in the near future.

**How is methamphetamine used?**
Meth can be smoked, snorted, injected, or orally ingested. The injection of meth may contribute to higher rates of infectious disease, especially hepatitis and HIV/AIDS, through the sharing of used hypodermic needles. (The photo below is of a drug kit.)

Methamphetamine abuse has three patterns: low intensity, binge and high intensity. Low-intensity users usually swallow or snort meth. Very quickly, these users can grow addicted and evolve into binge or high-intensity users, smoking or injecting the drug to achieve a faster and stronger high.

The most dangerous stage for users and those around them is called “tweaking.” Tweaking occurs at the end of the high, when nothing the abuser does will take away the feeling of emptiness and anxiety, including taking more meth. A meth abuser who is tweaking has probably not slept in 3 to 15 days and is consequently extremely irritable and paranoid. Confrontation increases the chances of violent interaction putting medical personnel and law enforcement officers in danger. However, a tweaker does not need provocation to behave or react violently. If the tweaker is using alcohol, his or her negative feelings and volatility are intensified.

Heavy methamphetamine users are more likely to be involved in domestic disputes and motor vehicle accidents. Attempting to reason with or detain a methamphetamine user at this stage is not recommended. Law enforcement should be called.

**SIX SAFETY TIPS FOR APPROACHING A HEAVY METH USER:**

1. Keep a 7-to-10 foot distance. Coming too close can be perceived as threatening.
2. Do not shine bright lights. A heavy methamphetamine user will already be paranoid and if blinded by a bright light, may be likely to run or become violent.
3. Speak slowly. This will decrease the odds that the methamphetamine users will misinterpret your actions.
4. Keep your hands visible.
5. Keep the person talking to reduce risk of physical reaction.
6. Slow your movements so as not to appear threatening.

Source: *National Drug Intelligence Center, US Department of Justice*
What are some of the effects of using methamphetamine?
Addiction, psychotic behavior, and permanent brain damage are some of the consequences of methamphetamine use. Withdrawal symptoms include depression, suicidal depression, anxiety, fatigue, aggression, and intense cravings. Chronic use can cause violent behavior, anxiety, confusion, insomnia, auditory hallucinations, mood disturbances, delusions, and paranoia. Damage to the brain caused by meth usage is similar to that caused by Alzheimer’s disease, stroke, and epilepsy. Parkinson’s disease is also likely to result from years of central nervous system stimulation caused by methamphetamine use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short-term effects of meth use</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>increased alertness</td>
<td>hallucinations</td>
<td>insomnia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sense of well-being</td>
<td>convulsions</td>
<td>impaired speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paranoia</td>
<td>loss of appetite</td>
<td>violent behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aggressive behavior</td>
<td>premature aging</td>
<td>dry, itchy skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased heart rate</td>
<td>uncontrollable twitching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potentially deadly rise in body temperature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. Where does methamphetamine come from?

National and North American sources
Illegal laboratories in California and Mexico are significant sources of methamphetamine. These larger labs are dependent on supplies of the precursor chemicals pseudoephedrine and ephedrine, which are sometimes diverted from legitimate sources and smuggled from Canada and Mexico. Efforts to work with Canada and Mexico have been made by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Currently, Canada reports any large shipments of these substances to the United States. Similar agreements are being pursued with the Mexican government and border patrol officials.

In recent years, increasing numbers of small, domestic labs have been found throughout the Western, Southwestern, and Midwestern states. This has been attributed to the increased control of the purchase of ingredients in large quantities. These small-scale labs are operated out of apartments, private houses, storage sheds, motor vehicles, and hotel and motel rooms. Portable, makeshift labs are found in bathrooms, kitchens and the trunks of cars. The “cooks” who make meth in these setups often find their ingredients at local retail outlets such as hardware or drug stores. Often these items are shoplifted from retailers. This saves money for the cook and prevents evidence that may indicate to a retailer that the person is producing methamphetamine.

Kentucky sources
Clandestine meth labs have been found throughout Kentucky, with the heaviest concentration in the Western region of the state. Law enforcement is finding these labs at an ever-increasing rate, including in the East and Central regions. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, 16 meth labs were seized in 1999, costing the state some $98,000 in cleanup costs alone. In 2003, DEA Superfunds were bankrupted by the Western Kentucky region alone. Additional grants were necessary to allow Kentucky to continue to remove the hazardous waste and protect the safety of the community.
Currently in Kentucky, a majority of methamphetamine is produced in small “mom and pop” labs. Often, children and elderly adults are in homes where this dangerous and volatile drug is produced. This puts these vulnerable individuals at risk for serious, potentially life-threatening conditions. Health risks also exist for individuals who stay in a hotel or motel room, purchase a car, or camp near a site formerly used for methamphetamine production.

**IV. How do I identify a methamphetamine user?**

Methamphetamine use is spreading rapidly in Kentucky. It is increasingly important that we all know the signs and symptoms of the drug and can recognize the patterns and stages of its abuse.

**What are the signs and symptoms of methamphetamine use?**

**Physical effects:** In large doses, methamphetamine’s common effects are irritability, nervousness, aggressive behavior, anxiety, excitement, auditory hallucinations, and delusions. Adverse consequences also include the risk of stroke, heart failure, and prolonged psychosis. You may also notice individuals with what appears to be acne or boils on their faces and bodies. These are often referred to as “speed bumps.”

**Psychological effects:** Mood changes are common, and users can rapidly turn from friendly to hostile. The extreme paranoia produced by methamphetamine use results in suspiciousness, hyperactive behavior, and violence.

**Why do people use methamphetamine?**

If the consequences of meth use are so terrible, why do people take it? Methamphetamine initially gives the user a feeling of euphoria. In addition, it speeds up the body’s metabolism, which increases energy and alertness and decreases appetite. People take it for the rush, to lose weight, or to reduce the need for sleep. Comments of users have been known to include the following:

- I can do anything.
- I can’t function without it.
- I feel smarter.
- I feel powerful and in control.

**How do I recognize a meth user?**

You cannot identify a meth user by sex, race, color, or other external signs. Users may be people you know and would not suspect. Here is a list of physical symptoms that may indicate meth use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signs of meth use</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>disturbed sleep</td>
<td>panic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hyperactivity</td>
<td>severe depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excessive talking</td>
<td>anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extreme weight loss</td>
<td>nervousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repetitive behavior</td>
<td>restless and agitated behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moodiness and irritability</td>
<td>loss of interest in friends, sex, and food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>false sense of confidence and power</td>
<td>aggressive and violent behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delusions of grandeur leading to aggressive behavior</td>
<td>smoking outside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. How do I identify a methamphetamine lab?

Meth labs can be set up in small, unlikely places, such as storage units, motel bathrooms, apartment houses, farm land, grazing fields, in water wells, or on property belonging to absent landowners. The by-products of meth production are so toxic that awareness of these risks is essential to the health of our communities. Knowing how to act in such situations may protect the health of children and elderly adults who are at the mercy of adults operating a meth lab. It is vital that community members are able to identify signs of such activity and notify the proper authorities.

Important Warning: Never enter what you suspect to be a meth lab. If you find yourself inside one, leave immediately, making sure not to open or touch anything. Many of the chemicals used in meth production are caustic, corrosive, or create noxious, harmful fumes. Handling methamphetamine waste residue can burn your skin and eyes, and breathing in the gases can send you to the hospital. Weapons are very common in meth labs, and because production/use of the drug results in extreme paranoia, there is the potential that weapons may be used with little discretion. People who use meth are often very paranoid and may go to extreme measures not to get caught.

If you notice any activity that you think might be related to meth production or use, please use the contact information in Section VI to pass information along to the proper authorities.

How do I recognize a methamphetamine lab?

You may be unaware that you are living near a meth lab. Here are some signs to look for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meth lab indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>unusual strong odors (like cat urine, rotten eggs, ether, ammonia, acetone, or other chemicals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>residences with windows blacked out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open windows vented with fans, even during the winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>renters who pay their landlords in cash or offer cash to store items or dispose of trash on property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lots of traffic and people coming and going at unusual times, especially at night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excessive trash, including items such as antifreeze containers, lantern fuel cans, red-stained coffee filters, battery casings, bubble wrap, glassware with rubber tubing attached, drain cleaner, and duct tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unusual numbers of clear glass containers being brought in or found in the trash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the chemicals used to make meth are found in common items, such as lantern fuel, household cleaners, nail polish remover, drain cleaner, engine starter, lighter fluid, swimming pool cleaner, and diet and cold pills.
The following substances may indicate a meth lab if they are present in large quantities or in an unlikely location (i.e., in apartment buildings or state parks):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substances that may indicate a meth lab:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acetone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anhydrous ammonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>antifreeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>batteries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>battery acid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benzene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black iodine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bronchodialators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>camp stove fuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chloroform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cold tablets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drain cleaner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diet aids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>energy boosters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ephedrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>epsom salts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot plates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hydrochloric acid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iodine crystals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isopropyl alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muriatic acid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phenyl-2-propanone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phenylacetone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phenylpropanolamine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>propane cylinders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red phosphorous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rock salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sodium metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>starting fluid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sulfuric acid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toluene/paint thinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white gasoline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wooden matches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VI. If I suspect meth-related activity, who should I contact?

If you suspect meth-related activity in your community, you should never try to investigate or stop it yourself. The chemicals and processes used to make meth are highly dangerous, as the people who make and use it often are.

If you believe a meth lab exists in your community, make specific note of any suspicious behavior you observe. You may want to write down the times of day that traffic is the heaviest or that unusual chemical odors are particularly strong. Record the type or license plates of the vehicles at the premises or even physical descriptions of those who come and go.

Call 1(800)222-5555 to report your observations. Reports can be made anonymously. If children appear to be involved or are living in a home where this activity is occurring, this is very important to note.

Please use 911 only for emergency situations to report crime in progress or if someone is in imminent danger. For all non-urgent issues, please refer to the contact information for your county’s law enforcement, prevention and treatment centers located in Section X of this Guide.
VII. What are the community impacts of meth?

Community Safety
Violent behaviors are correlated with substance abuse with a majority of violent crimes being committed while under the influence of drugs and alcohol. Communities experiencing substance abuse problems within them can reasonably expect increases in burglaries, domestic violence, child abuse, and unusual causes of accidental or violent death. It is important to understand these correlations so you can help prevent such devastating effects in your community.

Drug-endangered children
Nationally, children live in more than 30 percent of the homes where meth labs are found. Many of these children test positive for the drug, and are exposed to serious physical and psychological damage. In Kentucky, it is estimated that 40 to 45% of methamphetamine cases involve children. The environment the labs create is so toxic to children that many states consider it a crime of endangerment to allow a child to live in or visit a meth lab. In Kentucky, penalties can be enhanced if children are present during the production of this drug.

Environment
Methamphetamine labs pose a serious threat to the natural environment that we Kentuckians so value, as well as to the community environments in which we live. Meth labs create between five and six pounds of toxic waste for every pound of the drug they produce. The cooking process generates lethal gases and creates a highly flammable and explosive environment. These toxic vapors permeate the plaster, drywall, and wood around them and if vented outside, are released into residential neighborhoods. One of the greatest risks of chemical exposure occurs when people unsuspectingly move into buildings formerly used as meth labs.

Illegal disposal of toxic by-products leads to the contamination of surface and ground water, soil, and air. Hazardous chemicals are often poured into bathtubs, sinks, and toilets or are taken and dumped along nearby roads, farm land, wells, and creeks.

Economy
Meth lab cleanup is hazardous, specialized work that can cost thousands of dollars creating an economic burden for Kentucky. In addition, our tax dollars must pay for the prosecution and incarceration of those charged with meth-related crimes, the investigation of child abuse and the placement of children in foster care, as well as for treatment programs, social services, and increased law enforcement.

Individual users
Methamphetamine is highly addictive and extremely difficult to stop using. Once someone finally quits using methamphetamine, brain functioning can continue to decline for approximately 18 months before improvement is noted. Because the brain decreases production of dopamine with the neural overload of dopamine caused by methamphetamine use, severe depression is very common to the former user. It can take 18 months for his or her brain chemistry to begin to repair itself. Even so, many neurological and cognitive effects of limb control and thought processing can last a lifetime. Long-term meth abuse can cause lifelong medical and psychological problems. Few people who try methamphetamine are able to avoid becoming lifelong users.
Resources are available, but many people do not know how to access them, or they are ashamed to seek help. If you or someone you know has a problem with meth abuse, please contact the numbers provided in the last section of this guide. There is no shame in asking for help.

VIII. Becoming a voice in your community

You now know how to recognize the signs of meth use and production and are ready to become the eyes and ears of your community.

The Walk Your Land initiative is for the rural community. As the initiative develops, we hope to engage Cooperative Extension boards, local community members, teachers, the faith-based community, law enforcement professionals, treatment and prevention professionals, retailers, and others to work together to address the issue of methamphetamine at the local level.

The success of Walk Your Land depends on the impact its messages have at the local level in every community across the state. The most important voice in this effort is yours. In this section, you will learn how to become a voice in your community and will be given the tools to become an effective advocate.

Here are just a few of the actions you can take in your community:

Write a letter
Send a personal letter to an elected official or other community leader. Keep your letter simple and focused on the central issues. Feel free to use the statistics, information, and language from this guide in your letters. It is important to make sure that everything you write is accurate and up to date.

Provide local or personal insight whenever possible, explaining how meth abuse affects your community. Make sure you mention that you are a constituent or community member and specifically ask for a response. More letter-writing tips and sample letters are included in Section IX.

Make a phone call
On particularly complicated or important issues, a phone call may be necessary. If you know the elected official or community leader personally, ask to speak directly to him or her (and be prepared to leave phone numbers where you can be reached during the day or evening).

If you don’t know the elected official, introduce yourself, your issue, your interest in the issue and why the issue is important to the community. Ask if he or she has determined a position on the issue. Offer to be a resource for information – even if he or she disagrees with your position.

Pay a personal visit
Elected officials and other community leaders try to make time for personal meetings with community members, although their schedules are hectic. You will have your greatest likelihood of success if you are able to plan far in advance, be flexible on the time of your meeting, and keep your request to 10 minutes.

To schedule a meeting, call the community leader’s office. State the purpose of the meeting and provide as much advance notice as possible.

Follow the visit with a thank you letter that reiterates your key points.
Attend a local forum or community meeting
Elected officials and other community leaders often host town hall meetings or participate in issue forums that are open to the public. Check your local newspaper or chamber of commerce newsletter for meeting announcements.

You also can call and ask when your legislator/community leader will be speaking at a public meeting or hosting a town forum. Bring co-workers or other interested people with you when you attend. Inform the community leader and the audience about the threats methamphetamine poses to your community. Ask for the community leader’s commitment to the issue. Here are a few tips:

- When you attend a meeting, come prepared to speak.
- If you are not speaking, come prepared to ask a question.
- Take the time to write down the central points of your presentation or question.
- Make sure your presentation or question is clear and concise and focuses on the core issue.
- If asking a question, make it just that. Don’t deliver a speech.
- Listen carefully to the answer. If the format permits, ask a follow-up question.

A word about e-mail
Electronic communications to community leaders can play an important role. The quantity of e-mail a leader receives on an issue can indicate the amount of support or opposition regarding this issue.

Keep in mind, however, that many legislators are bombarded with electronic communications. It is not uncommon for a legislator to receive several hundred e-mails every week. Save your e-mails for situations in which time is of the essence. In most cases, a thoughtful, timely letter or call will deliver your message most effectively.

IX. Letter-writing tips and samples

Writing a letter can be the best way to convey exactly what you are thinking and what you would like to see from your elected official. Be sure to include your name and address, and indicate what type of response you are interested in receiving, such as a letter or a call back. In most cases, a constituent’s request for a return letter or call will be honored. The downside to letter writing is that you do not have the opportunity to exchange ideas or ask questions that you have during a phone call or meeting.

The following tips will help you get your message across effectively:

- Use of correct salutation (e.g., Senator, Representative).
- Type your letter.
- Make sure to include your home address or office address so the recipient knows you are a constituent. Also note that you are active in the Walk Your Land initiative.
- If you know your legislator, even vaguely, note that in the first paragraph. For example, “I really enjoyed your speech at the rotary meeting last week.” This will help personalize your letter and separate it from the other letters received that week.
- Remember that you are the expert on the issue of meth use and production in your community. Legislators cannot be versed in every topic. They rely on experts and constituents to help educate them on issues of importance.
• Use your own words to write a personalized letter. Explain how the issue affects you, your employees, your profession, and/or your community.
• Briefly state your position and what you would like the legislator to do. Limit the letter to one page. Be specific.
• To locate your legislator, call the Legislative Research Commission at: (502) 564-8100, or go online to: http://lrc.ky.gov/whoswho/2004cnty.htm.

Sample letter to legislators:

Dear Rep. or Sen. (Last Name):

Thank you for your service in the Kentucky Senate/House of Representatives. I greatly appreciate the commitment of people like you who are willing to invest in public service.

I am writing about an issue of special concern to me and to my community—the increase in methamphetamine use and production in my town.

Although many Kentuckians may never encounter meth directly, it affects every one of us. Meth undermines the safety of our communities, bringing violent crime, theft, and environmental pollution with it. It puts children at risk and contaminates more than just the bodies of the people who take it. It destroys families and pollutes the air around us, the water we drink, the soil and contaminates the structures in which it is produced.

[Take this space to talk about the specific aspect of meth abuse-its impact on children, crime, the environment, etc.-you wish your representative to focus on. See the information in Section VII for ideas, information, and language. Feel free to include a personal story or information on meth use in your community.]

Thank you for your time and attention. I urge you to contact me if you’d like more information about the impacts of meth in my community.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Title
Business Address
Telephone
E-mail address
Writing an e-mail message
Although e-mails are convenient and fast, they are the least effective way to communicate with legislators. E-mail campaigns, in which legislators are bombarded with messages, are becoming more and more common. Legislators can’t always tell who the e-mail is coming from or whether it is important.

However, there may be times when speed counts. Save your e-mails until you need to send an urgent and timely message.

When you communicate by e-mail, avoid sending a message without carefully considering what you are writing. Make sure you include your full name, address, and phone number in the text of the e-mail. Keep the e-mail brief and to the point, but don’t forget to make the case on behalf of your community.

Writing a letter to the editor
Letters to the editor of your local newspaper are an effective way to inform others about the issues surrounding methamphetamine use and production.

Note that each newspaper has different requirements for letters to the editor. Look in the newspaper or on the web to determine the specific format your newspaper requires. A complete list of Kentucky newspapers can be found at the Kentucky Press Association website: http://www.kypress.com/main.asp.

Some general guidelines:

- Always start your letter “Dear Editor:”
- Make your letter concise and informative. Three short paragraphs, a total of 75 to 150 words is generally an ideal length. (Be sure to check your newspaper’s maximum word count.)
- Let readers know in the first paragraph why you are writing the letter.
- Tell readers why the issue is important to your entire community. Readers are more likely to act if they believe an issue will somehow affect them.
- Do not include statistics unless you are sure of their accuracy, and quote sources whenever possible. A personal story that shows how the issue affects you or the community can be more compelling than facts and figures.
- Include a “call to action.” Urge readers to support legislation or to learn how to spot the signs of meth use and production in their neighborhoods.
- Sign the letter, and include your address and day and evening phone numbers so the newspaper can verify you as the letter writer.
Sample letters to the editor:

Dear Editor:

Methamphetamine is a drug unlike any other. It is not a substance that needs to be imported or one that is controlled solely by large drug rings. The ingredients to make it are readily available and it can be produced in small batches in makeshift, local laboratories. It originates in our own communities and that is where it does its damage—weakening our economy, polluting our environment, and threatening our neighborhoods, families, and children.

If we learn to recognize the signs of methamphetamine use and production, together we can help rid Kentucky of meth. Please visit www.ca.uky.edu/heel/ to find out what you can do. Kentucky was meth-free, it can be again.

Sincerely,

Name, Title, Address, Phone Number

Dear Editor:

Earlier this year, the Attorney General spoke to a group of community leaders about the importance of addressing the issue of methamphetamine use and production in our community. What we heard was that while only a small percentage of Kentuckians use meth, we are all affected by it.

Violent crime, property destruction and toxic waste are just a few of the terrible by-products of meth use and production in our town. If we work together, we can help rid our community of methamphetamine. Please visit www.ca.uky.edu/heel/ to learn the signs of meth use and production and to find out what you can do to help.

Sincerely,

Name, Title, Address, Phone Number
10 Years of Meth Use

Photos on this page courtesy of Kentucky State Police
X. Resources and contacts

NATIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

**Law Enforcement**
Drug Enforcement Administration [www.usdoj.gov/dea/index.htm]

**Prevention and Treatment**
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention [www.samhsa.gov/centers/csap/csap.html]
National Crime Prevention Council [www.ncpc.org]
National Health & Human Services Directory [www.isafetynet.org/]
National Institute on Drug Abuse [www.drugabuse.gov]
Office of National Drug Control Policy [www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov]

STATE OF KENTUCKY ONLINE RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

- KADD (Kick Alcohol and Drug Dependency) [www.kadd.org]
- Operation UNITE [http://www.operationunite.org]
- Chrysalis House [http://www.chrysalishouse.org/]
- Cumberland River Comprehensive Care Center [www.cumberlandriver.com]
- The Adanta Group [www.adanta.org]
- Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital [www.careyoucantrust.com/main.asp]
- Bluegrass Regional Mental Health-Mental Retardation Board, Inc. [www.bluegrass.org]
- The Healing Place [www.thehealingplace.org]
- The hope center [http://hopectr.org/]
- Kentucky River Community Care Inc. [www.krccnet.com/substance]
- LifeSkills, Inc. [http://lifeskills.com/]
- North Key Community Care [www.northkey.org]
- Oxford House, Inc. [http://www.oxfordhouse.org/kentucky.html]
- The Ridge Behavioral Health System [www.ridgebhs.com]
- Care Academy [www.careacademyky.com]
- Pathways, Inc. [www.pathways-ky.org]
- Comprehend, Inc. [www.comprehendinc.com]
- Ten Broeck Hospital [www.tenbroeck.com]
- Seven Counties Services, Inc. [www.sevencounties.org]
- Penny Royal Center [www.pennyroyalcenter.org]
- Mountain Comprehensive Care Center [www.mtcomp.org]
- Anchor Counseling [www.anchorcounseling.com]
- The Morton Center [www.themortoncenter.org]
- Shepherd’s House [www.shepherdshouseinc.com]
- Caritas Health Services [www.caritas.com]
- The Society of St. Vincent de Paul [www.svdplou.org]
## Kentucky Mental Health Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name / Address</th>
<th>Services / Phones / Web</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Center</td>
<td>(270) 252-1211</td>
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<tr>
<td>1106 Main Street</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Benton, KY 42025</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lifeskills Inc Park Place</td>
<td>Intake: (270) 842-2546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>822 Woodway Street</td>
<td>Hotline: (270) 843-4357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling Green, KY 42101</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adanta Behavioral Health Services Womens Recovery</td>
<td>Intake: (270) 789-6601</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td>Hotline: (800) 633-5599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020 Hodgenville Road</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Campbellsville, KY 42718</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>New Choices</td>
<td>(270) 827-7457</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. 41 Alternate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dixon, KY 42409</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicare Recovery Center Elizabethtown</td>
<td>Intake: (270) 765-5145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1311 North Dixie Highway</td>
<td>Hotline: (800) 641-4673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabethtown, KY 42701</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Substance Abuse Specialists</td>
<td>Intake: (859) 371-4455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7415 Burlington Pike Suite A</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Florence, KY 41042</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bluegrass Education and Treatment for Addiction</td>
<td>Intake: (502) 223-2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>925 Wash Road</td>
<td>Hotline: (800) 928-8000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frankfort, KY 40601</td>
<td>(859) 381-0837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluegrass East Comprehensive Care Center Teen</td>
<td>Intake: (859) 253-2737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Outpatient Program</td>
<td>Hotlines: (800) 928-8000 (859) 246-7410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500 West Main Street Suite 110</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bluegrass.org">http://www.bluegrass.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexington, KY 40511</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles I Schwartz Chemical Dependency Treatment Center</td>
<td>Intake: (859) 246-7282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>627 West 4th Street Allen Building</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lexington, KY 40508</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>KY Professional Assessment Center, LLC</td>
<td>Intake: (859) 275-1166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2366 Nicholasville Road Suite 601</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lexington, KY 40503</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson Behavioral Health Professionals</td>
<td>Intake: (606) 878-3472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>777 North Laurel Street</td>
<td>Hotline: (606) 878-3472</td>
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<tr>
<td>London, KY 40741</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aaron Accredited Treatment and Education Services</td>
<td>4010 Dupont Circle Suite 203, Louisville, KY 40207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighthouse Adolescent Outpatient Services</td>
<td>914 East Broadway, Louisville, KY 40204-1037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighthouse Adolescent Recovery Center</td>
<td>1935 Bluegrass Avenue, Louisville, KY 40215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas J Bumpas</td>
<td>6000 Brownsboro Park Boulevard Suite G, Louisville, KY 40207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers of America Inc Freedom House</td>
<td>1432 South Shelby Street, Louisville, KY 40217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Kentucky Drug and Alcohol Intervention Services Inc/Mayfield</td>
<td>1301 Princeton Drive, Mayfield, KY 42066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Substance Abuse Specialists</td>
<td>525 Alexandria Pike South Hills Medical Center, Suite 100, Newport, KY 41071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Kentucky Drug and Alcohol Intervention Services Inc/Paducah</td>
<td>6th Street Irvin Cobb Hotel, Paducah, KY 42001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland River Comp Care Center</td>
<td>915 North Laurel Road Box 360, Pittsburg, KY 40755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Kentucky Drug and Alcohol Intervention Services Inc/Princeton</td>
<td>108 West Main Street, Princeton, KY 42445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Center</td>
<td>Gateway Center Suite 224, Somerset, KY 42501</td>
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Glossary

addiction—compulsive need for and use of a habit-forming substance (as heroin, nicotine, or alcohol) characterized by tolerance and by well-defined physiological symptoms upon withdrawal;

anhydrous ammonia—common crop fertilizer also used in the production of methamphetamine

auditory hallucinations—hearing things that are not real

broncho dialator—dilation of airways to improve breathing or to treat asthma

caucistic—burn-causing

cook—the chemical process that results in the illicit substance, methamphetamine

corrosive—to weaken or destroy the strength of a metal or object

delusions—seeing things that are not real

delusions of grandeur—imagining or seeing things as more important or impressive than they are in reality

dopamine—the body’s “feel good” hormone; also synthetically produced with use of illicit drugs

ephedrine—the primary ingredient or “precursor” in methamphetamine; this is the natural form of the chemical; can be used interchangeably with the synthetic version, pseudo-ephedrine

euphoria—a feeling of well-being or elation

insomnia—prolonged and usually abnormal inability to obtain adequate sleep

methamphetamine—a central nervous system stimulant that is often produced in make-shift “lab” settings

“Mom and Pop” labs—an unsophisticated method of producing illegal methamphetamine

paranoia—a mental state characterized by delusions and/or a tendency to be a part of an individual or group toward excessive or irrational suspiciousness and distrustfulness of others

Parkinson’s disease—a chronic progressive nervous disease chiefly of later life that is linked to decreased dopamine production in the substantia nigra and is marked by tremor and weakness of resting muscles and by a shuffling gait

rush—the very intense effect of introducing methamphetamine into the body

repetitive behavior—repeated behaviors, seemingly without thought or control, that are often observed in drug users

speed bumps—lesions or “acne-like” bumps on the skin of meth users

street names—terms methamphetamine-users call their drug
Bibliography:

An Explosion in California’s Clandestine Methamphetamine Laboratory. Mark Miller, MD, MPH. Office of Environmental and Health Hazard Assessment, EPA. (presentation) 2000.


Adapted from: Meth-Free MT Grassroots Guide.

Reviewed by:

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