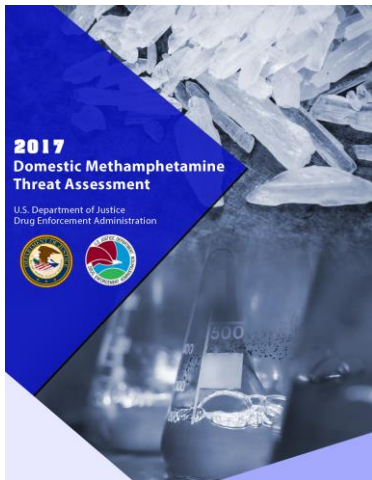


2017 DOMESTIC METHAMPHETAMINE THREAT ASSESSMENT KEY FINDINGS



The Domestic Methamphetamine Threat Assessment provides a comprehensive strategic assessment of the threat posed to the United States by the trafficking and use of methamphetamine.

This report combines federal, state, and local law enforcement reporting; public health data; news reports; and intelligence from other government agencies to assess the methamphetamine threat to the United States.

Methamphetamine is a Schedule II stimulant under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). Methamphetamine is a synthetically-produced central nervous system stimulant that metabolizes slowly and has long-lasting effects.

The methamphetamine threat in the United States has shifted over the last decade, with domestic production decreasing and more methamphetamine coming from Mexico to supply the U.S. methamphetamine market.

- **The methamphetamine threat is particularly high in the west, southwest, and central parts of the country..** Availability has increased in some eastern regions as Mexican traffickers expand their operations to gain a larger share of eastern U.S. markets. Mexico-based drug trafficking organizations are the primary suppliers of methamphetamine to the United States.
- **Provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) indicates that 7,663 people died from psychostimulant use in 2016.** While the psychostimulant category includes other substances (such as MDMA and amphetamines), CDC indicates the majority of deaths in this category are related to methamphetamine.
- **2017 National-level survey and 2014 treatment data indicate methamphetamine use remains high among users 18 years of age or older.** However, according to the 2016 Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey, use among adolescents is at the lowest rate since 1999.
- **Prices are the lowest they have been in years and the average purity of seized methamphetamine remains at or above 90 percent.** Prices likely remain low due to increased competition as more trafficking organizations have become involved in wholesale-level methamphetamine trafficking.
- **According to the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) 2016 Annual Report, methamphetamine was the second most frequently identified drug in cases after cannabis/tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).**
- **Methamphetamine seizures along the Southwest Border (SWB) continue to increase while domestic production continues to decrease.** U.S. Customs and Border Protection indicates seizures along the SWB increased 157 percent from calendar year (CY) 2012 to CY 2016 and the majority of methamphetamine seized along the SWB in CY 2016 occurred in the San Diego corridor. According to the National Seizure System, during that same time, domestic methamphetamine laboratory seizures decreased 67 percent.
- **Methamphetamine in the United States originates primarily from clandestine laboratories in Mexico and is smuggled across the SWB.** While traffickers employ various methods and techniques in the transportation of methamphetamine, the most commonly utilized transportation method remains passenger vehicles with hidden compartments. The use of methamphetamine dissolved in liquids as a concealment method has increased over the last 10 years.
- **The diversion of methamphetamine precursor chemicals, usually by fraudulent labeling or false declarations, in and through Mexico and Central America remains a concern for law enforcement authorities.**

(U) This product was prepared by the DEA Strategic Intelligence Section. Comments and questions may be addressed to the Chief, Analysis and Production Section at DEAIntelPublications@usdoj.gov. For media/press inquiries call (202) 307-7977.