



B69 Clandestine Laboratory, Synthetic Drugs, and Precursor Chemicals Trends in the United States Over a Seven Year Period: 2001-2007

Liqun Wong, MS, Christine Sannerud, PhD, and Susan Carr, BS, Drug Enforcement Administration, Office of Diversion Control, 600 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, VA*

After attending this presentation, attendees will have an enhanced understanding of the trend and distribution of clandestine laboratory, synthetic drugs and precursor chemicals over a seven year period (2000 through 2007) and geographical regions. The presentation will be based on clandestine laboratory seizure, drug and precursor chemical seizure, and analysis data from international, federal, state and local sources.

This presentation will impact the forensic community by providing an overall view and changing trends on clandestine laboratory, synthetic drugs especially methamphetamine, and precursor chemicals used to product these drugs.

The number of clandestine laboratories seized by U.S. law enforcement agencies declined for the past several years. The number of clandestine laboratory peaked in 2003, then dropped in subsequent years. The decreasing trend mainly attributed to the increasing controls on precursor chemicals at the national, state and local levels. However, methamphetamine is continuously appearing as one of the top four drugs seized in the country, and the abuse is still at epidemic levels. Over 98 % of the clandestine laboratories in the U.S. were producing methamphetamine. According to the National Seizure System (also known as Clandestine Laboratory Seizure System), the number of clandestine laboratories declined about 50% between 2001 and 2006, from 13,000 to 7,000 after peaked at 17,000 in 2003. Methamphetamine is the most widely used synthetic drug in the U.S. Nationally, the number of methamphetamine seizure reported by state and local laboratories increased 24% between 2001 and 2005, from 199,271 in 2001 to 247,288 in 2005. From 2005 to 2006, however, the number of methamphetamine seizure dropped 16% to 208,262, based on the National Forensic Laboratory Information System. Most of the methamphetamine used in U.S. is made with chemical precursors such as pseudoephedrine and ephedrine that are diverted from the international stream of commerce. Reported by the International Narcotics Control Board, over 1,640 kilogram of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine was seized by U.S. government, comparing to 1,450 kilograms in 2005.

Clandestine Laboratory, Methamphetamine, Pseudoephedrine/ Ephedrine