



STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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TO: WISCONSIN FERTILIZER, AGLIME, AND PEST
MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

FROM: WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
DIVISION OF NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT

Dear Retailer:

In the past few years, law enforcement agencies in the Midwest have seen a sharp rise in the popularity of methamphetamine. This powerful synthetic drug (also known as meth, crank, speed, ice, glass, and crystal meth) has spread from the western United States to the Midwest. In some parts of the country, methamphetamine has replaced cocaine as the drug of choice.

Methamphetamine presents a serious challenge for schools, hospitals, law enforcement officers, and emergency response officials. Not only are meth users a significant threat to public safety, but the clandestine labs that are often used to make this drug pose extreme risks for public health and environment.

Methamphetamine is produced in small, mobile, unsophisticated "labs" by persons with no chemistry background, who are frequently called "cooks" because they follow a recipe. Almost all of the items used to produce methamphetamine can be found in any local retailer, including, but not limited to:

- pseudoephedrine-based products (i.e. Sudafed)
- lithium batteries
- sulfuric acid and/or muriatic acid
- starting fluid (ethyl ether)
- coffee filters
- drain cleaners (lye)

- acetone/paint thinners and other solvents
- plastic tubing
- plastic gas containers
- Coleman lantern fuel (white gas)
- duct tape
- squeeze-sipping bottles and sun tea glass dispensers
- matchbooks

In the most commonly encountered method of manufacturing methamphetamines, anhydrous ammonia is also used as a reagent. Persons involved in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamines most commonly steal the anhydrous ammonia from farm co-ops, suppliers, and nurse tanks in farmer's fields. They store the anhydrous ammonia in thermos jugs, LP cylinders, fire extinguishers or other improper containers until it can be used.

Further, due to increased thefts, some farm suppliers in northwestern Wisconsin have had to install additional security measures including: increased lighting, cement barricades, security cameras, removal of hoses and valves, and alarm systems to prevent continued theft of anhydrous ammonia and the associated damage to equipment and loss of product.

In 1999, the theft, possession, improper storage, and improper transportation of anhydrous ammonia became a crime in Wisconsin under state statute 101.10.

We seek your cooperation in helping us in our law enforcement efforts against those who produce methamphetamine. We ask that if you see individuals purchasing large quantities of the above-mentioned products that you discreetly and safely collect information on the individual. Helpful information includes a name and/or license plate of the vehicle the individual may be operating.

We are working hard to control the infiltration of this dangerous drug into the communities of Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Narcotics Enforcement has spearheaded efforts in Wisconsin by initiating the Clandestine Laboratory Enforcement and Response Task Force, comprised of Federal, State, and Local law enforcement officers specifically trained to deal with the hazards associated with illicit methamphetamine manufacturing.

We appreciate any cooperation you can offer. Should you have any questions or wish to provide information, please contact your local law enforcement agency or the Division of Narcotics Enforcement at (608) 267-1333. If you wish to remain anonymous, you may contact our toll-free Drug Tip Line at (800) 622-3784.

