



Meth lab cleanup funding dries up

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ALBANY, GA (WALB) - Meth lab operations are increasing drastically but it looks like the feds are cutting funding to clean up those labs.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency won't be paying to clean up Georgia meth labs. Money is drying up, creating a burden on taxpayers, especially when they rely on law enforcement agencies and fire departments to respond to these dangerous operations.

"Funding is crucial to our response and we need the best equipment so our guys can be safe when responding to these meth labs," said Rubin Jordan, Chief of Training at the Albany Fire Department.



Jordan says funding the DEA has provided HAZMAT teams to clean up labs that state and local authorities bust is vital, especially since Georgia meth lab busts have increased 50 percent over the last three years.

27-year veteran, Assistant Chief Allen Cravey, remembers responding to a meth lab explosion in 2009. He says since the federal government won't pay for the cleanup, it could soon be a burden on taxpayers.

"The bottom line is the chemicals have to be disposed of properly and somebody is going to have to pay for it," said Chief Cravey.

Emergency responders say failing to clean up dangerous chemicals like battery acid and drain cleaner is simply not an option.

The average cost to clean up a meth lab is \$5,000 and the Albany Fire Department says that's a modest number.

According to the Georgia Meth Project, meth abuse costs the state more than a billion dollars a year.

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