

THE METH PROJECT

Methamphetamine Impact: National Statistics

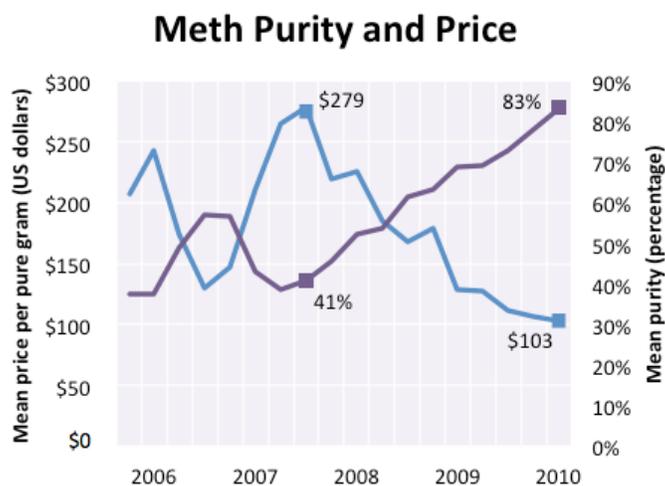
The abuse of methamphetamine—a potent and highly addictive psychostimulant—continues to be a very serious problem in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. Methamphetamine abuse leads to devastating medical, psychological, and social consequences. Adverse health effects include memory loss, aggression, psychotic behavior, heart damage, malnutrition, and severe dental problems. Methamphetamine abuse also contributes to increased transmission of infectious diseases, such as hepatitis and HIV/AIDS, and increases in crime, unemployment, child neglect or abuse, as well as other social ills.ⁱ

Scope of the Problem

12.6 million Americans have used methamphetamine, a drug considered more addictive than heroin, and a significant contributor to crime in America.ⁱⁱ According to RAND, Meth abuse costs the U.S. an estimated \$16.2 billion to \$48.3 billion annually.ⁱⁱⁱ

Recent trends are raising new concerns about this deadly drug:

- Meth in the U.S. is at the **highest levels of availability and purity, and lowest cost since 2005^{iv}** largely due to trafficking by the Mexican cartels, now the #1 source for all Meth sold in the U.S. Traffickers have also developed systems to elude tracking pseudoephedrine systems (used to make Meth). There is now a **highly lucrative black market for pseudoephedrine**.

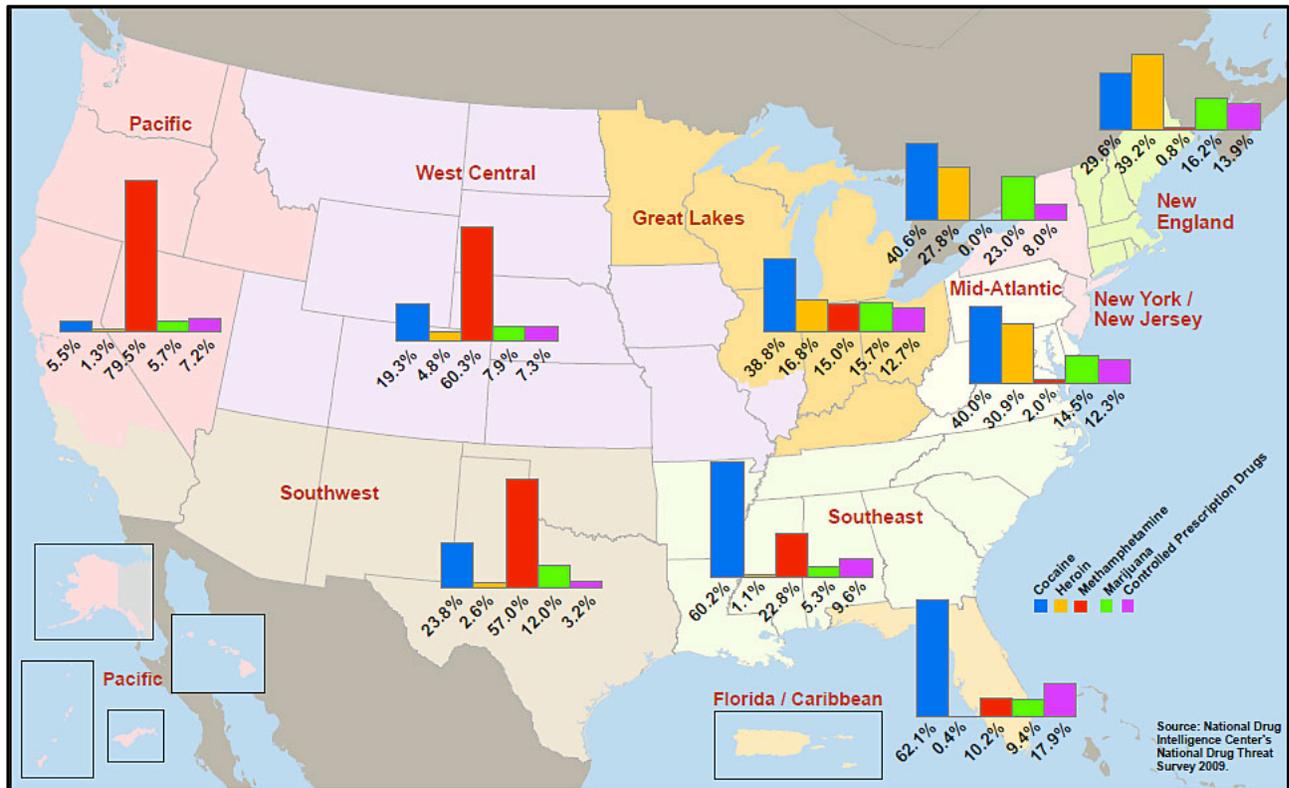


Drug Enforcement Agency, *STRIDE* data. February 2010.

- **Meth-related criminal activity**, including arrests, seizures, and Meth lab discoveries, increased **34%** in 2009.^v

The U.S. Department of Justice's National Drug Threat Assessment^{vi} continues to report that an overwhelming percentage (66%) of state and local agencies in the Western states perceive Meth as their greatest drug threat. Comparatively, 16% perceive cocaine as their top threat (see Figure 1). Nationally Meth is considered one of the greatest drug threats as reported by state and local agencies, second only to cocaine.^{vii}

Figure 1



Meth Use and Treatment

- The number of people who tried Meth for the first time in the past year has increased by 62% from 2008 to 2009.^{viii}
- The calculated costs associated with drug treatment are approximately \$545 million, of which \$491 million is in the community-based specialty treatment sector.^{ix}

ⁱ Nora D. Volkow, M.D. Director National Institute on Drug Abuse Website.

ⁱⁱ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. September 2009.

ⁱⁱⁱ RAND, The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine Use In the United States, 2005. February 2009.

^{iv} Drug Enforcement Agency, *System to Retrieve Information from Drug Evidence (STRIDE)*. February 2010.

^v AP Review of data from U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, 2010

^{vi} U.S. Department of Justice, National Drug Intelligence Center, National Drug Threat Survey 2009, published in National Drug Threat Assessment 2010.

^{vii} Ibid.

^{viii} Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. September 2010.

^{ix} RAND, The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine Use in the United States, 2005. February 2009.