

**KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT  
BUREAU OF WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY 00-01**

related to the  
**Storage and Disposal of Wastes from Methamphetamine Laboratories**

January 28, 2000

Background

The department has received an increasing number of questions about management of wastes generated by methamphetamine laboratories (meth labs). With the increased focus of law enforcement agencies on curtailing this illegal activity, more of these laboratories are being discovered and closed. Consequently, local officials are required to make decisions regarding the handling and disposal of the resulting wastes.

Purpose

This Bureau of Waste Management policy provides guidance to Bureau staff and permitted solid waste facilities about the storage and disposal of wastes generated by meth labs. There are three categories of wastes associated with meth labs: non-hazardous solid wastes; small quantities of wastes having hazardous constituents; and large quantities of wastes having hazardous constituents.

Action

The attached sheet outlines typical non-hazardous solid wastes generated from meth labs. These wastes are considered solid wastes that may be disposed at any Municipal Solid Waste Landfill and do not require a Special Waste Disposal Authorization.

Small quantities of wastes (such as waste from one or two box labs) that contain hazardous constituents may be accepted for storage and disposal by a Household Hazardous Waste facility. These wastes may be picked up by the hazardous waste transporter along with the other HHW at these facilities. The HHW facility is required to send an amendment to their Operation Plan which indicates their intent to receive, store, and dispose of this category of waste.

Large quantities of wastes (such as waste from permanent laboratories) that exhibit hazardous constituents will be considered to be hazardous waste. These wastes will usually be stored at a KDHE facility and transported for disposal by the State's hazardous waste contractor according to RCRA requirements. HHW facilities may be asked to store large quantities of waste until arrangements are made for transportation and disposal by the State's hazardous waste contractor.



William L. Bider  
Director, Bureau of Waste Management

1-31-00

Date

# **Kansas Department of Health and Environment**

## **Typical Non-hazardous Methamphetamine Laboratory Waste**

Below is a list of some of the items consistently found at methamphetamine laboratories (meth labs) which by definition are non-hazardous. These articles are suitable for disposal at most Kansas municipal solid waste landfills (MSWLFs).

### **Gassing Generators**

These are typically constructed from 2-liter soda bottles with a plastic tube sealed into the top or from reusable "sport" drink bottles with an attached tube. After use these devices contain a small amount (typically less than 8 ounces) of either rock salt or pickling salt. During their use a quantity of sulfuric acid is added to the salt to generate HCL gas. After reaction is complete, the salt and a small amount of the acid remain. During cleanup, KBI or their contractor neutralizes any remaining acid with bicarbonate of soda. The sludge which remains is the combination of the soda and unreacted salt and generally exists as a moist paste or a caked material. The heat of reaction often melts the plastic in the container. Smaller labs may have only a few of these, larger labs may contain several dozen of these devices.

### **Coffee filters, cloth strainers, dried residue from processing precursors and containers which are used for processing.**

Often paper coffee filters are the media of choice to separate unwanted solids from the extract which contains the methamphetamine or its precursors. Other types of filter media may also be used. All filters contain solid residues, which commonly have a characteristic reddish/orange or off-white color, depending on the method of production. Those which are reddish/orange are the result of using red phosphorous in the reaction. The residue may contain small amounts of unreacted phosphorous.

Generally there will be an accumulation of glass or plastic containers of various sizes and shapes which, at one time may have contained drugs or precursors.

### **Flammable liquid containers**

These are abundant at virtually all meth lab sites. Those containers which are totally devoid of liquids should be disposed of as general trash. The only pressurized containers which may be disposed of as municipal solid waste are starter fluid cans which have been breached with a sharp object. Often, these may number in the dozens if not hundreds. Other containers commonly found are those which once contained camping fuel, mineral spirits, naphtha, paint thinners, methylene chloride, other petroleum products, or chlorinated solvents. Only those containers which have had their lids removed or have been punctured may be disposed of in a MSWLF. Any container with liquids still present is not suitable for landfill disposal until it has been emptied and air dried.

### **Empty packages of precursor ingredients**

These are varied and many. Much of the debris will be from blister packs, bottles, and other containers which held pseudoephedrine or ephedrine compounds. Other containers may include empty caustic drain cleaner bottles or cans, empty sulfuric acid bottles, stripped lithium batteries (the lithium metal has been removed), and empty capsules which once contained the precursor drugs and/or the tablets or

capsules containing the precursor drugs, along with residues from crushing or grinding the tablets and equipment used to crush or grind the tablets. Charcoal briquets and their packaging which were used as scrubbers for the vapors generated during production of the methamphetamine are also commonly found.

**Stained and contaminated materials**

These are materials which may have come in contact with ingredients used to produce methamphetamine. These include, but are not limited to, carpeting, flooring, furniture, wall board, clothing, toys, bedding, boxes, magazines, other household articles, and ornamental curios.

In any meth lab situation, there may be large quantities of household rubbish and debris. These items will not be disposed of by KDHE. They will remain the responsibility of the resident or property owner. Our intent is to address only those materials which are some way connected with the production of methamphetamine or have been contaminated by materials used in production.