

**POST-CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS
WORKSHOP SESSION SUMMARY
NIEHS NATIONAL TRAINERS' EXCHANGE
MARCH 2007**

1. Session Title and Presenter's Contact Information

**Illicit Drug Labs: A Safe Response for Public Service Personnel
*Disaster/Emergency Response and Preparedness***

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2. Workshop Summary

This workshop provided a look at the IAFF's revised Illicit Drug Labs course (previously Clandestine Labs). The course is eight-hours of instructor-led, student-centered activities focused on hazards, safe operations, personal protective equipment (PPE), decontamination, air monitoring and detection, and the fire department's role. The appendices include U.S Drug Enforcement Agency data, the Controlled Substances Act, Emergency Response Guide pages, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Pocket Guide pages, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), chemical hazards response information, OSHA HAZWOPER Standard Interpretation, and a cross-walk to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 472 Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction. The objective was for participants to examine the target audience, course objectives, and an overview of the course content/student-centered activities and provide feedback.

3. Methods

The Illicit Drug Lab course includes guided discussions, team case studies, and practice using reference materials such as MSDS and the NIOSH pocket guide to determine the hazards present, appropriate PPE, air monitoring and other safe operations. Topics of discussion include up-to-date facts on the prevalence of illicit drug labs in the U.S., types of labs, lab locations, clues for recognition, safety procedures and tactical guidelines, available PPE and compatibility, air monitoring considerations and devices, and the type of support fire departments may have to provide during illicit drug lab raids by law enforcement.

The instructor must have expertise in the topics of discussion and emergency response as well as the ability to facilitate student-centered activities. If available, the instructor should obtain and make copies of the department's standard operating procedures (SOP) related to illicit drug labs.

4. Main Points

Key lessons from the course

- NFPA 472 as revised in 2006 provides guidance for safe operations in illicit drug labs for responders across multiple disciplines including fire and law enforcement.
- Illicit labs include labs manufacturing drugs and weapons of mass destruction.
- The most prevalent type of illicit labs first responders encounter is methamphetamine labs.
- There are a variety of methods for manufacturing illicit drugs.
- Although legislation has passed limiting access to the main ingredients used in the manufacture of methamphetamines, the number of seizures continues to increase and is spreading from the west coast of the U.S. to the east.
- The manufacture of methamphetamines combines chemically incompatible hazardous materials that are flammable, friction sensitive, explosive, toxic, corrosive, and water- or air-reactive.
- First responders must be careful of what they touch and do at an illicit drug lab.
- Structural Firefighting Protective Clothing (SFPC) is insufficient to protect first responders from the hazards present at illicit drug labs.
- Respiratory protective equipment and chemical protective clothing (CPC) must be compatible with the hazards present and worn by all persons present at an illicit drug lab incident.
- Air monitoring and detection results can be used to determine appropriate PPE and safe operations.

- Safe operations should be determined using a risk-based approach and the Analyze, Plan, Implement, Evaluate (A-P-I-E) process.
- Illicit drug lab incidents are cross-discipline operations that require multiple agencies to establish SOP before an incident occurs.

Responses from participants

- Responses to illicit drug labs require first responders to have a high-level of competence.
- Authorities having jurisdiction, following OSHA requirements, will determine the number of additional training hours dedicated to illicit drug lab response.
- NIMS credentialing may improve the question of the level of competence of first responders on the scene of illicit drug labs.

5. References

National Drug Intelligence Center, <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/>
U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, <http://www.dea.gov>
White House Office of National Drug Control Policy,
<http://www.methresources.gov>

6. Workshop Handouts/Resources

Handout: Illicit Drug Labs, Trainers Exchange 2007 PowerPoint Presentation (IAFF Illicit Drug Labs NIEHS TE 2007 PPT.pdf)