

# **TRAINING SEGMENT ONE**



**TRAINING SEGMENT ONE – 25 Minutes**

**INTRO:** In this block of training you will learn several key historical facts about METH. How it came to the U.S. and its transition in the early twentieth century, then use through the sixties and today. We will also identify the current National, State, and Pierce County trends and statistics in Methamphetamine Production, its use, and treatment.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** Following this training session, you should be able to identify and discuss the following information regarding METH:

- Use in China
- How METH came to the U.S.
- Medical use of METH in the early twentieth century
- Epidemics
- METH in the 60's through the 80's
- How METH took on the 90's
- The National, State, and Pierce County METH perspective
- Where we are headed

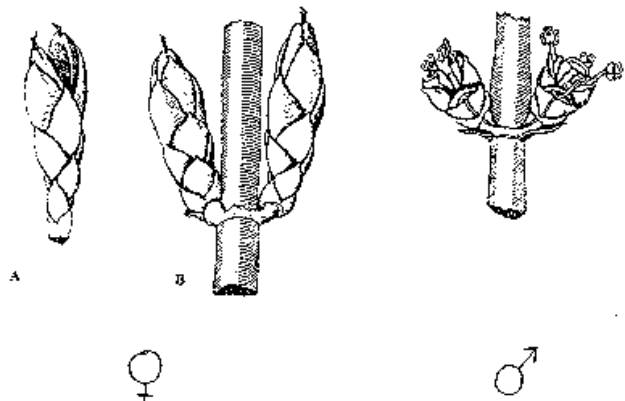
**METH's Historical Perspective:**

For centuries in China an organic substance called ephedrine was culturally accepted and widely used in medical practice. Trade missions through the area were responsible for ephedrine's distribution to Europe and North America, but unlike opium, information is limited on the use or abuse of ephedrine prior to the mid 1800's.

(Photos courtesy Pierce County Sheriff's Dept)



**Ephedrine Plant**



**Artist Drawing of Ephedrine Buds**

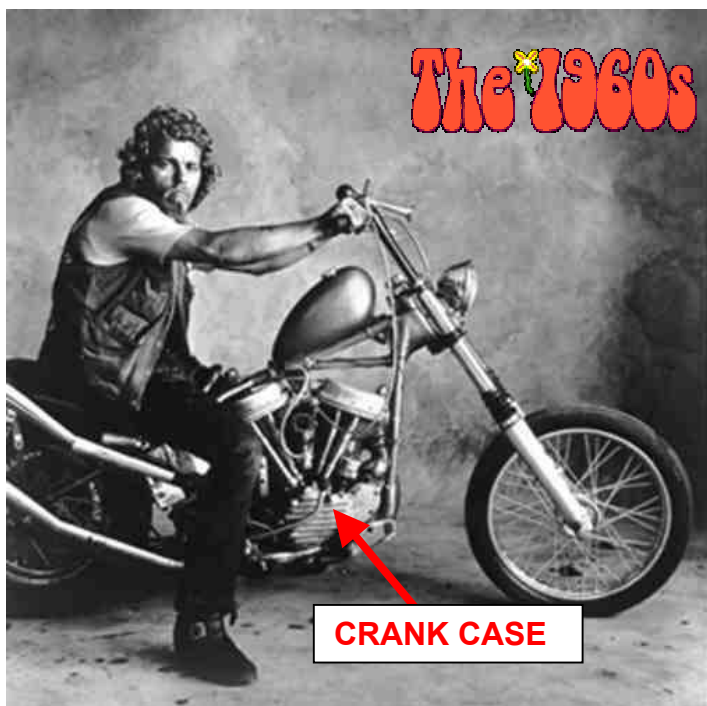
In 1887 the drug ephedrine was synthesized for the first time into what is now called Methamphetamine. Throughout the early years of the twentieth century, Methamphetamine was widely used in much the same manner as opium, mainly in small quantities as an ingredient in a

variety of wonder drugs. These drugs claimed to “cure all manner of ailments” and were referred to as snake oils, tonics, and cure-all drugs.

Then in 1932 it was manufactured and sold as a stand-alone nasal spray for treatment of inflammation to nasal passages. It was made available in tablet form in 1937 and prescribed to treat the spontaneous sleep disorder known as narcolepsy.

The first recorded abuse of Methamphetamine occurred in the late 1930s and 1940s. METH was widely used by the Allies and Axis as a method of improving troop performance while under extreme physical stress and sleep deprivation. Following the end of World War II it was identified as a major problem in Japan. The Japanese military had a vast quantity of Methamphetamine left over from its war effort that it made available to the general public. METH use in Japan reached epidemic proportions in a matter of a few years.

The second epidemic came in the 1960’s when outlaw motorcycle gangs became the primary agents for distribution and abuse. The habit of storing the drug in their motorcycle’s crankcase during transport led to the drug’s nickname “Crank.” It was also less than half as potent as today.



(Photo originally used in 1960's Life Magazine)



In 1970 the Controlled Substances Act was passed and Methamphetamine production became regulated under strict Federal guidelines. Not to be deterred, the criminal element increased production in Mexico and the United States. Distribution of the drug continued utilizing every method available.

In the late 1980’s METH use took another turn as a new form was introduced. This new METH called “ICE” could be smoked and it created a whole new avenue for a user to become an addict. This new epidemic started in Japan and Korea, but quickly spread to Hawaii and the western U.S.

The 1990’s saw another increase in the production and use of METH in California, Arizona, and the entire Western Region. METH use also began spreading eastward at an alarming rate. Despite the eastward movement, the heaviest production and use continues on the west coast, with the problem often growing faster than law enforcement can put together task forces.

## National Trends:

Today, Mexican National Crime Organizations are still the primary manufacturers and suppliers. These organizations operate large labs in southern California and Mexico, running distribution operations up and down the west coast.

The primary smuggling route is I-5 with the drugs usually stashed in sophisticated hidden compartments within the motor vehicles. In addition, people referred to as “mules” are used to transport shipments. Often their families in Mexico are under threat if the Mule steals the drugs or informs.



NOTE: The bottom line is MAKING MONEY. It's a Business to Drug Traffickers.

Recent trends show that due to increased law enforcement pressure in California many labs are relocating to the Pacific Northwest. Clear evidence of this is in Washington State where clandestine laboratories are on the rise, matching and surpassing the National Average by another 20%. While small in production capability, their product runs at 90% purity in comparison to that seized from Mexico averaging 12% purity when cut at the street level.

In addition, in 1994 there were only 36 METH labs reported in Washington State. In 1998 there were 349. Compare that to 789 reported in 1999 and you can see where we are headed.

In the year 2000 and beyond, reports on home METH labs, as well as larger clandestine production facilities, are expected to dominate the calls regarding illegal activities. In later training lessons you will learn much more about the deadly aspects of Methamphetamine production and abuse.



Medium size clandestine lab  
(Law Enforcement Display)

Designed to show normal setup  
found at locations geared for  
large scale cooking and  
distribution of METH.

(Photo courtesy of Pierce County Sheriff's Dept.)

## Pierce County Perspective:

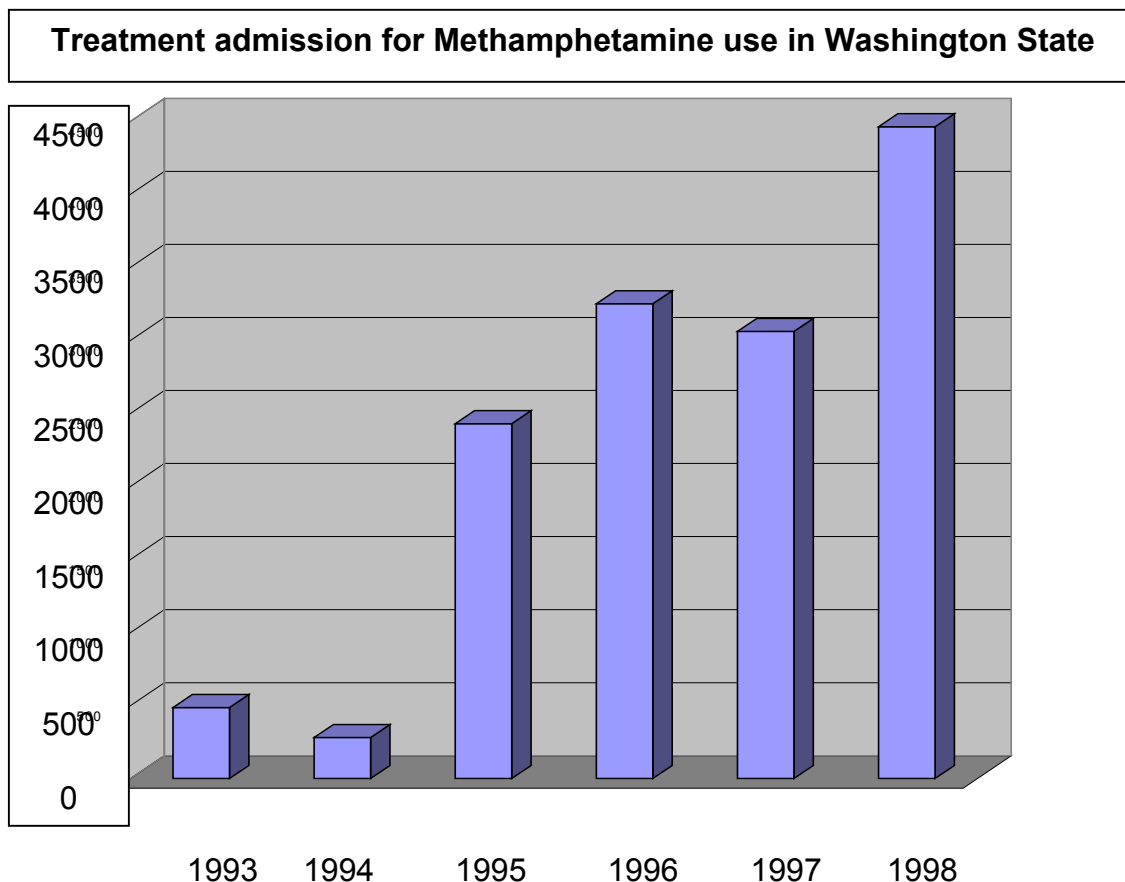
Now that you know the origins of METH and who today's major suppliers are, let's take a look at what's cooking in Pierce County. This information may shock you when you compare Pierce County to the rest of Washington State.

In Pierce County, the rate of METH lab reports has increased to where officials cannot keep up with requirements. Currently the Pierce County task force is shutting down an average of one METH lab per day, but by the end of 2000 it is expected they will be facing two per day or even more.

Officials do not want the number of reports to drop due to lack of community interest. The Clandestine Lab team members are extremely proud of the work they do and are dedicated to support community needs. What officials want is the number to drop because there are fewer labs in your community.

In order to reach a point of less use and cooking of METH in Washington state and Pierce County, it will take time. Some people will argue that we are already too late in taking a stand. We cannot give up that easily and we need to be involved in our community.

To give you an idea of what all our communities are facing with the METH Challenge, we have provided some charts for your review. Pay particular attention to the Pierce County number as compared to the rest of Washington State and you can see why some people believe we are already too late in acting. The question to them should be, "What will the statistics become if we do nothing as a community?" The statistics below for drug treatment admission for METH use alone are staggering.



Department of Ecology - Methamphetamine Labs Reported Yearly by Washington Counties

COUNTY	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Adams	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Asotin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Benton	-	-	-	1	-	1	3	4	7	38
Chelan	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	2
Clallam	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	3	3	-
Clark	5	2	4	1	3	3	12	20	12	16
Columbia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Cowlitz	-	-	3	1	-	1	3	9	2	8
Douglas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Ferry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Franklin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	8
Garfield	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Grant	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Grays Harbor	3	1	-	2	2	1	3	5	5	16
Island	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	5
Jefferson	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
King	6	10	2	7	7	10	23	17	48	107
Kitsap	1	1	2	1	-	-	3	-	1	21
Kittitas	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	3
Klickitat	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	3	-
Lewis	3	1	1	2	3	4	7	9	31	33
Lincoln	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mason	3	-	-	2	-	-	4	4	10	21
Okanogan	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	3	2
Pacific	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	1	6
Pend Oreille	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	6	10
Pierce	10	18	18	12	17	17	53	42	129	318
Skagit	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	4	2
Skamania	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Snohomish	2	2	-	2	-	-	7	6	5	13
Spokane	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	7	11	36
Stevens	0	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	5
Thurston	1	4	5	4	2	6	25	63	58	86
Wahkiakum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Walla Walla	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	8
Whatcom	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whitman	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yakima	3	3	-	2	-	1	5	1	2	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>789</b>

## What do the Numbers Show?

As with any statistic, numbers can be made to show the speaker's desired point of view, but there are also clear messages in these charts as well. It is hard to refute the evidence of an increase in METH related treatment cases. In 1993 the total number of people entering state treatment programs who reported METH as their primary drug was 486.

In 1994 that number more than doubled to 980 cases. Then in 1995 it rocketed to 2,429. At the close of 1998 that number was approaching 4,500. In the period from 1993 to 1998 the number of people admitted for treatment of METH addiction rose 912%.

What caused this increase? There are several factors. One factor is the associated crimes committed by the METH community; so many more METH cases were identified through the court system. The second is the low cost and easy access to METH, as well as the long lasting high it gives the user.

To get a better idea of the relation between METH and other community crimes, the Washington State Narcotics Investigators Association provides the following information:

68% of users were involved in assault, 82% in burglary, 49% in child abuse, 61% in domestic violence, 86% in theft, 46% in mail theft, 49% check/credit card fraud, and 37% in auto theft.

So where does that leave Pierce County in the numbers game? From the Department of Ecology's Yearly METH Lab Report, it is clear that Pierce County lead the entire state every year from 1990 – 1999. In 2000, we are already at a total of 200 plus reported labs as of 15 May, with the Pierce County Clandestine Lab team closing an average of one lab per day.

Looking at the Department of Ecology's METH Lab Report for 1999, you can see that 40% of all reported METH labs were in Pierce County with a total of 318 reported. To clarify those numbers, it must be added that Pierce County has taken a very active stand against METH and the Clandestine Labs. Community Education is just one of the ways we can work together to ensure our neighborhoods remain safe from drugs, violence, and other hazards.

As you continue through this training, keep in mind that somewhere in Pierce County the Clandestine Lab Team is shutting down another lab, but elsewhere another could be starting up.



(Photos courtesy Pierce County sheriff's Office)

**Large Clandestine METH Lab in a Garage – Next Door to You?**

## **Anticipated Trends for 2000 and Beyond:**

The most apparent trend will be a continuation of the proliferation of Nazi labs. To conceptualize a Nazi lab, think about a box 2½ feet long, by 1½ foot wide, by 1½ foot tall. The box is crammed full of ingredients, all purchased legally. Nazi labs make METH on what is considered a personal use basis. It fulfills the METH needs or rather the cravings of the addict. In addition, it offers freedom of fear from contact with dealers, and is simple to use. The addict makes the METH needed to satisfy a craving as easily as you would make chocolate chip cookies.

However, the same danger exists as with a larger lab - explosion, contamination, toxic fumes, and exposure to METH.



**METH in powder form**



**METH LAB in car trunk**

## **What Can You Do?**

As we cover the information in upcoming training sessions, it is important to learn all you can about the many hazards METH poses to you, your family, and the community. You will learn safe and effective action plans and guidelines for use as individuals and as a community team. You will also learn how to develop partnerships with local and state law enforcement agencies, as well as other local and state agencies specially trained to deal with the hazards of METH. Remember, the best plan of attack begins with education. Knowing the enemy will help you plan the battle. Knowing who's on your team and working with them, will help you execute your community safety plan.

As you read through this training program, remember that it is a guide. The strategies recommended will definitely help you and your community in the fight against METH. However, do not be afraid of developing and trying other plans as well. The plan you develop might help someone in another community, county, or state.

The METH challenge is not limited to Pierce County, nor is it limited to Washington State. It is a challenge with which the entire country is faced. It is a challenge that demands we each take an active role. As you will see in the coming readings, METH poses hazards to you, your family, and your children that go well beyond the possibility of use and addiction.

## **TRAINING SEGMENT ONE QUIZ:**

**Try to answer the following TRUE/FALSE questions without looking back at the reading.  
(Answers can be found on next page)**

- 1) Ephedrine is found in primarily in Europe.
- 2) Methamphetamine was first used in a manner similar to opium and was mixed in a variety of “cure-all” drugs.
- 3) The term “Crank” comes from the method used in the 1970’s to transport METH.
- 4) Smokable METH was introduced into the U.S. in the 1940’s and is called “WOW”.
- 5) METH Labs are on the rise for no other reason than an increase in crime.
- 6) Community awareness is not needed, because METH use and production is a matter for the police to handle.

## **TRAINING SEGMENT ONE ANSWERS:**

- 1) FALSE – Ephedrine comes from China and was introduced in the early trade missions with Europe and the U.S.
- 2) TRUE – like many drugs in the 1800's, Methamphetamine was used as a cure-all. You'll find in later reading that it has little to do with medical science and a lot more to do with mental manipulation.
- 3) TRUE – In the 1970's outlaw motorcycle gangs were the main distributors of METH. The most common method of transportation of the drug was in a motorcycle's crankcase, leading to the term "Crank".
- 4) FALSE – Smokable METH known as "ICE" was introduced from Asia in the 1980's and quickly became a favorite among users.
- 5) FALSE – METH lab identification is on the rise in part due to crime, but a more important part of METH lab identification is through community involvement.
- 6) FALSE – As mentioned in answer five above, community involvement is a must. In later readings you will see just how important you can be in the elimination of METH use and production.

**Congratulations! You have just taken your first step towards a METH free community. When ready, begin reading Segment Two.**