How to Recognize the Signs of a Clandestine Methamphetamine Laboratory

SUPPORT AGENCIES

New York State Police
Division Headquarters (24 Hours)
(518) 457-6811

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (24 hours)
Law Enforcement: (800) 457-5680
State Spill Hotline: (800) 457-7362

New York State Office of Fire Prevention & Control Headquarters (24 Hours)
(518) 474-6746

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
NY Field Division: (212) 337-1810

New York State Office of Children and Family Services
Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register (24 hours)
(800) 342-3720

New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services
www.oasas.state.ny.us/meth/index.htm

EMERGENCY

Dial 911 or local law enforcement

**FIRST AID**

Do not become a victim yourself!
Avoid exposure!
If an injury is suspected, call 911 or local law enforcement for medical assistance.
Chemicals react in many ways. Physical harm may not be immediately visible but may develop later.
- Move victim to a safe area where fresh air is available.
- Remove any contaminated clothing/foot wear.

Anhydrous Ammonia or Caustic Chemicals
Flush eyes or exposed skin with clean water for 15 minutes. Repeat until relief is apparent or reported. Note that when anhydrous ammonia is released from a pressurized cylinder, it can freeze objects or skin on contact. If clothing is frozen to patient, DO NOT remove clothing until you have soaked the clothing with clean water (lukewarm if possible). Immediately remove clothing when thawed and continue to flush exposed areas with clean water.

Lithium or Sodium (silvery-white metals)
Brush off. DO NOT FLUSH WITH WATER. These chemicals will ignite on contact with water.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT ONLY**

Secure the site immediately.
Mandated Notification to Upstate NY Regional Intelligence Center (UNYRIC) via NYSPIN File 13c.
For additional information or instructions for reporting, contact UNYRIC (518) 786-2100.

Clandestine laboratories can be extremely dangerous. Immediate emergency response is necessary.

Contact local law enforcement or dial 911 for initial response and evaluation.
WHAT IS A CLANDESTINE LABORATORY?

A clandestine laboratory is an unlawful operation consisting of laboratory equipment and chemicals that are used to illegally produce controlled substances such as methamphetamine.

Chemicals found in clandestine laboratories can be hazardous. Exposure to these can damage the respiratory tract, mucous membranes, eyes and skin. Some of the chemicals can produce a fire or explosion. Immediately leave the scene and contact your local law enforcement agency if you encounter what you believe is a clandestine laboratory. Inform law enforcement if you believe children are present.

**CAUTION**

Chemicals found in a clandestine laboratory are hazardous and toxic. Do not breathe vapors. Avoid contact.

**PRODUCTS COMMONLY FOUND IN CLANDESTINE LABS**

- Muriatic acid
- Battery acid
- Lye
- Drain cleaner
- Charcoal lighter fluid
- Ether starting fluid
- Denatured alcohol
- Dry gas products
- Iodine crystals (7% tincture of iodine)
- Kerosene
- Gasoline
- Mineral spirits
- Lacquer thinner
- Aluminum foil
- Camera batteries
- Cat litter
- Epsom salts, table or rock salt
- Over-the-counter cold medicines containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine

If you encounter what you believe is a clandestine laboratory based on this information, immediately leave the premises and contact your local law enforcement agency.

**Signs of a Clandestine Laboratory**

- A large number of containers of camping fuel, paint thinner, acetone, starting fluid, lye, drain cleaners, sulfuric acid or bottles of muriatic acid (hydrochloric acid).
- Soft silver or gray metallic ribbon or chunk stored in oil or kerosene. The metal may ignite upon contact with water or air.
- A large number of lithium batteries, especially ones that have been stripped.
- A large number of cold tablet containers that list ephedrine or pseudoephedrine as ingredients.
- A large number of match books or striker plates.
- Jars labeled as iodine or containing shiny, metallic, dark purple crystals or orange stained containers.
- Jars containing clear liquid with a white colored solid on the bottom.
- Jars labeled as red phosphorous or containing a fine dark red or purple powder.
- Coffee filters containing a white pasty substance, a dark red sludge, or small amounts of white shiny crystals.
- Glass cookware, funnels, hot plates or frying pans containing a powdery residue.
- Bottles or jars with rubber tubing attached.
- Chemical smells such as ether, ammonia or acetone or a strong smell of urine.
- Propane tanks with fittings that have turned blue from contact with anhydrous ammonia. These may contain anhydrous ammonia and can be VERY DANGEROUS.

Because of safety and legal concerns, any materials found at a clandestine laboratory should ONLY be handled by properly trained individuals.