

2005 Thurston County Methamphetamine Coalition Report



Spring 2006

Our Mission

“We value our diverse communities and recognize their health and safety is threatened by the epidemic of methamphetamine. In response, we band together to fight the epidemic by creating a comprehensive, measurable program of law and justice, treatment, cleanup and prevention. We will accomplish this mission through a wide-ranging effort involving the entire Thurston County community.”

Coalition Members

Elected Officials

Cathy Wolfe, Thurston County Commissioner
Gary Alexander, State Representative 20th District
Kelly Love, Congressman Brian Baird's Office
Vickie Larkin, Thurston County Commissioner's Office

Environmental/Cleanup

Carolyn Comeau, WA State Department of Health
Civilia Winslow-Hill, WA State Department of Health
Eric Heinitz, WA State Department of Ecology
Gerald Tousley, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services
(Chair)
Linda Puryear, WA State Department of Ecology
Nanette Brooks, WA State Department of Ecology
Ron Holcomb, WA State Department of Ecology
Sharon Kophs, WA State Community, Trade and Economic
Development

Law Enforcement

Brad Watkins, Thurston County Sheriff's Office
Camille Dexter, WA State Department of Corrections
Chris Mealy, Thurston County Sheriff's Office
John Price, Thurston County Sheriff's Office
Chris Wickham, Thurston County Superior Court
Colby Karlson, WA State Department of Corrections
Dan Kimball, Thurston County Sheriff's Office
Dee Koester, Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
Ed Holm, Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney
Ellen Goodman, Thurston County Superior Court (Drug Court)
Ettore Castellente, East Olympia Fire District Six
Fred Bjornberg, Thurston County Sheriff's Office **(Chair)**
Gary Edwards, Thurston County Sheriff
Gary Michel, City of Olympia Police Chief
Jamie Kambich, DSHS, Child Protective Services
Jane Futterman, Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office

Janice Barnes, Thurston County Juvenile Probation
Joice Hagen, WA State Department of Corrections
Loreli Thompson, Thurston County Narcotics Task Force
Neil McClanahan, Thurston County Undersheriff
Pamala Cordis, WA State Department of Corrections
Phil Comstock, City of Lacey Police
Richard Jordan, WA State Department of Corrections
Shanna Church, Thurston County Superior Court
Shawn Ball, Thurston County Sheriff's Office
Sheila Kirby, Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
Steve Nelson, City of Olympia Police
Tom Zweiger, Washington State Patrol
Wayne Graham, Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office

Prevention/Outreach

Brenda Ross, TOGETHER!
Jim Anderson, Superintendent, Rochester Public Schools
John Tennis, Thurston County Public Information Program Manager
(Chair)
Kathy Raettig, TOGETHER!
Lance Larson, Safeway
Linda Clark, Rochester Weed & Seed
Mary Segawa, TOGETHER!
Patricia Coloma, TOGETHER!
Tony Kim, WA State Liquor Control Board
Kristi Strup, Thurston County Public Health and Social Services

Treatment

Bev Peterson, Crisis Clinic
Bruce Wood, DSHS
Carl Flowers, BHR Recovery Services
Carlos Arroyo, Skokomish Tribe
Cynthia Santiago, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services
Deb Santella, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services
Diana Yu, MD, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services
Donna Bosworth, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services
Erik Landaas, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services
(Chair)

Hollie Christiancy, Providence St. Peter Chemical Dependency Center
James Koch, Providence St. Peter Chemical Dependency Center
Jason Kilmer, PhD, Addictive Behavior Specialist, Evergreen State
College
Jeff Threatt, DSHS
Ken Patis, Child Protective Services
Kristen West, CHOICE Regional Health Network
Pawnee Brown, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services
Sabrina Craig, Providence St. Peter Chemical Dependency Center
Sherri McDonald, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services
Shirley Toner, Department of Recovery Services
Tina Gehrig, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services

Other Community Members

Bill Washington, Emerald Point Apartments
Brenda Griffin
Cliff Moore, Washington State University Thurston County Extension
Denise Walker
Jennifer Myrick
Leannea Magnus, Chehalis Tribe
Linda Leblanc
Lis Merten, National Association of Chain Drug Stores
Mark Johnson, Retail Association
Rick Machado
Ross Wigney

Thurston County Methamphetamine Coalition

The Thurston County Methamphetamine Coalition was formed in 2001. The Coalition is an interjurisdictional, interdisciplinary organization created to fight the challenges that erupt from the manufacture, sale and abuse of methamphetamine. A primary objective of the coalition at the start was to shut down so-called "mom and pop" labs thereby helping to end the threat of child abuse and neglect in lab homes and easing the environmental damage from the highly toxic chemicals used in meth production. Of course, cutting back on the meth supply, the number of addicts and related crimes were also worthy goals. After a 5-year concentrated battle, the number of labs has dropped dramatically. However, law enforcement officials and treatment providers say there may not be a corresponding drop in the use of methamphetamine. In fact, the decline in locally produced meth appears to have opened the door for increased sales of the drug imported from "super-labs" in Mexico and elsewhere.

Another trend in 2005 is the emergence of dumpsites into the majority of cases statewide, now totaling 57% of the total of labs and dumps. (*State Department of Ecology Figures*) That trend is reflected in Thurston County as well. It appears that cooks are breaking the manufacturing process into several steps, often done at different locations, so the labs are harder to find. Better-educated county residents, including government and business employees who work outside, are now finding more remains of dumped labs and law enforcement is finding fewer active labs. As a result, the Methamphetamine Coalition has shifted resources for a slightly different focus.

The four main components of the effort continue to be-

- **Law Enforcement.**
- **Treatment.**
- **Outreach and Prevention.**
- **Environmental Cleanup.**

The work of the four subcommittees in 2005 is outlined in this report.

Law Enforcement.

The abuse of methamphetamine, as well as other illegal substances, continues to have a dramatic impact on Thurston County. Law enforcement agencies throughout the county continue their work to find and dismantle meth labs and to arrest those responsible. However, they also work hard to find those responsible for other illegal drug sales and incarcerate them. As for the changing meth situation, Tom Zwieger of the Washington State Patrol indicates that his enforcement group has worked cases where the Methamphetamine is primarily in the "crystal" form for the last two years. The foreign-based drug trafficking organizations from Mexico, with their local distribution cells, control most production and trafficking. Zwieger reports the suppliers have been very astute in keeping the price in the \$600-\$800 per ounce range, while Cocaine is in the \$500-\$650 range. All of these cells are poly-drug in nature and can supply Heroin, Cocaine, Marijuana and Methamphetamine.

Those involved in the law enforcement effort in 2005 include the Thurston County Sheriff's Office Special Enforcement Team (SET), The Thurston County Narcotics Task Force (TNT), The Washington State Patrol, The Prosecutor's Office, the Courts, The Police Departments in the cities and towns of Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, Yelm, Tenino and other agencies.

SET TEAM ACTIVITIES FOR 2005-

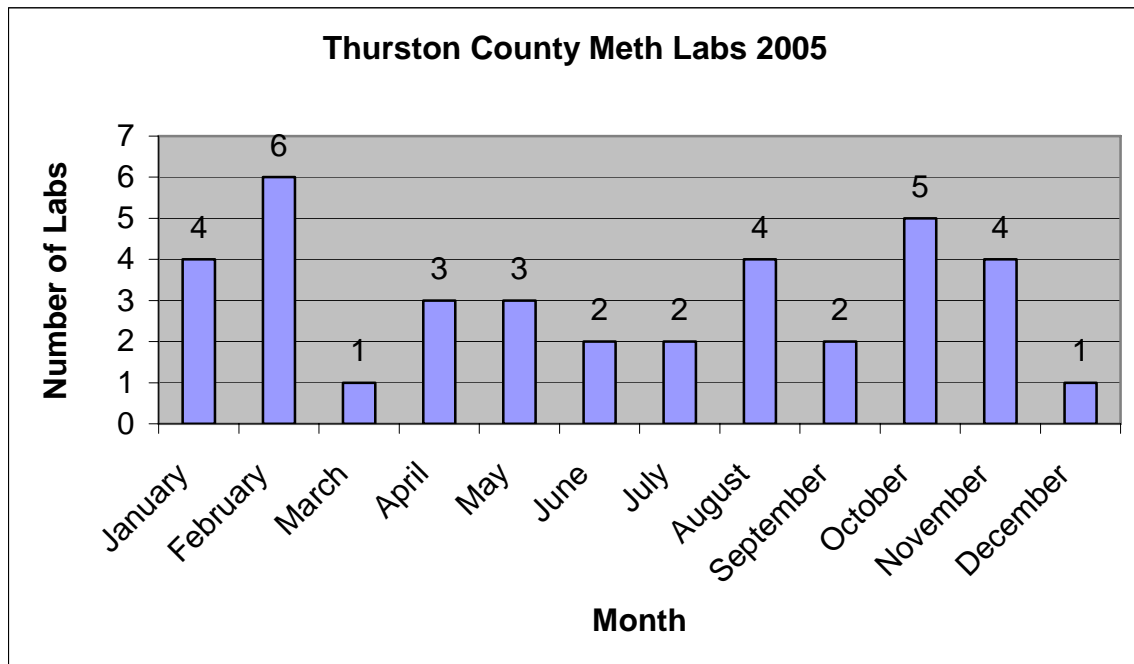
The SET Team continued to be highly active in 2005, with a slight change in emphasis away from meth labs and into other drug operations and crimes. They also contribute many hours toward community education. The team was involved in various investigations including-

- Meth Labs – 36*
- Marijuana Grows - 11
- Felony Probable Cause Arrests - 308
- Misdemeanor Probable Cause Arrests - 109

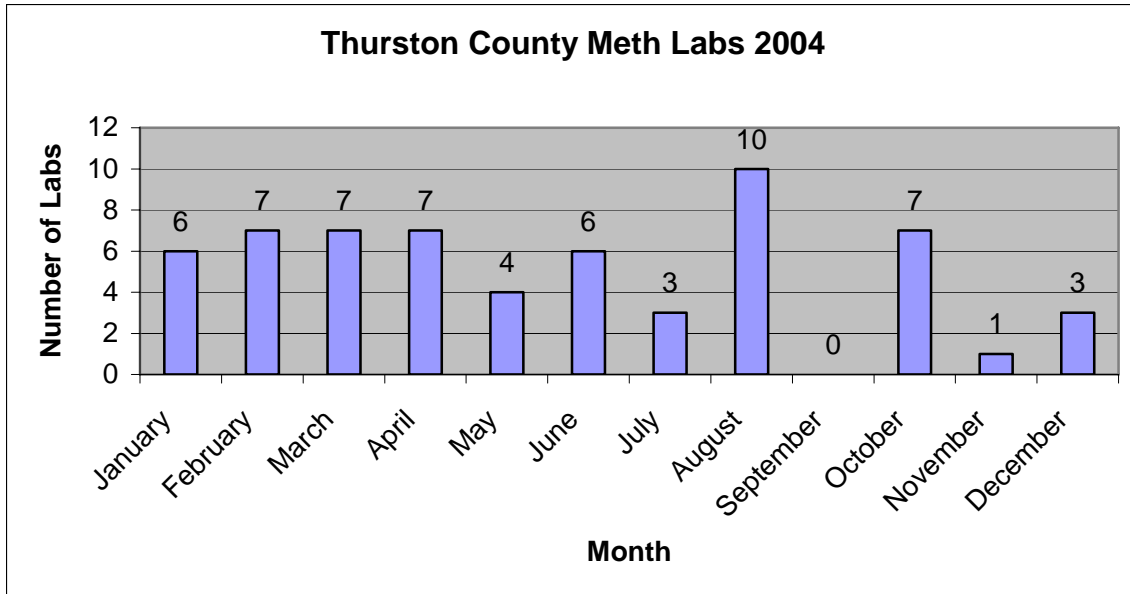
- Warrant Arrests - 208
- Recovered Stolen Property - \$257,741.
- Hours Spent in the "Weed & Seed" area of Rochester- 856 Hrs.
- Hours Spent on community Presentations - 93 Hrs.
- Tips-657.

* (Please note that due to reporting differences, meth lab numbers may not match with reports from the Department of Ecology.)

The number of labs continued to decline in 2005 after a high of 151 in 2001. In 2005, 37 active meth labs and dumpsites were reported for Thurston County. There are several reasons for the continued decline in "mom and pop" meth lab activities. Over the past several years, a number of meth cooks were arrested, convicted and sent to prison. The remaining cooks are much more cautious and may be better at hiding their operations. In addition, the crackdown has spurred meth cartels in Mexico, California and elsewhere to step up shipments of finished product to the South Puget Sound region thereby eliminating some of the need for home-based labs.



There were a total of 37 labs and dumpsites in Thurston County in 2004



In 2004, Thurston County experienced 61 labs and dumpsites.
 (Numbers courtesy of the State Department of Ecology.)

Thurston County Narcotics Task Force.

There was no lack of activity for the Thurston County Narcotics Task Force in 2005. This interjurisdictional team continued to work tips, staff undercover operations and pursue those who bring illegal substances into the county. Seizures of methamphetamine from dealers would seem to support the theory that there is a shift away from product coming from small labs in homes, trailers and sheds to a more refined “crystal” meth coming in from outside the area. In 2005 the TNT removed \$239,576.00 worth of meth from the streets. That compares to \$107,281.00 worth of meth taken from dealers in 2004. Despite the downturn in labs the TNT reports there is plenty of meth on the streets.

The chart below outlines the street value of illegal substances seized in TNT investigations in 2005.

Type of drugs seized 2005

	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	Type
	Heroin	Meth	Cocaine	Marijuana	Other	
January		107,304.00		482,258.00		
February	2560.00	5,800.00	200.00	14,138.00	2.0	Mushrooms*
March		3,288.00	450.00	342,274.00	10.00	Hashish
April	27,370.00	92,650.00	828.00	141,160.00	50,000.00	Crystal Meth* Ecstasy*
May		3,206.00		516,528.00	5,306.00	Mushrooms* Crystal Meth* Mushrooms*
June		3,128.00	6,100.00	2,100.00	70.00	Ecstasy*
July		2,494.00	500.00	91,105.00	700.00	Mushrooms*
August			1,700.00	208,150.00	100.00	Ecstasy*
September	2,800	4,472		40,000	6,337.00	Crack cocaine Crystal Meth*
October	12,061.00	11,624.00	560.00	2,233,450.00	1,607,600.00	Steroids* White Heroin
November		5610.00		5086.00	600.00	Mushrooms*
December			6,152.00		43,440.00	Ecstasy* Mushrooms* Ecstasy* Mushrooms*
Total	44,791.00	239,576.00	16,490.00	4,076,249.00	1,822,228.00	

Totals for Column on the Right

- *Ecstasy ---\$94,275.00
- *Mushrooms ---\$111,253.00
- *Crystal Meth ---\$7,735.00
- *Steroids ---\$1,607,600.00

Thurston County Narcotics Task Force officials say the figures for ecstasy indicate a major upswing in the import of this club drug into the Thurston County area.

Treatment-

There was good news in 2005 for local treatment programs. Several important programs were started, expanded and/or renewed. Finding enough treatment space to help meth addicts get off and stay off their drug of choice has been a challenge and continues to be a challenge. However, the programs outlined below provide an increased chance that willing addicts will find a chance for recovery.

Intensive Case Management

The Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse awarded funds for Thurston County's proposal to implement an intensive case management pilot project. The money pays for two case manager positions, one to be employed by Providence St. Peter Chemical Dependency Center and one at Behavioral Health Resources (BHR) Recovery Services. They were hired in October of 2005. The target population is clients with a primary chemical dependency diagnosis or chemical dependency and mental health diagnosis. These clients are typically high users of the criminal justice system, hospital emergency departments, local jails, etc. Case management services will be provided to assist with getting these difficult to serve individuals into treatment services and to increase retention.

Chemical Dependency Professional Outstationed at Department of Health and Social Services' Children's Administration Office

The Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse has awarded additional funds to Thurston County. These funds are to outstation a Chemical Dependency Professional in DSHS' Children's Administration Office. Since BHR Recovery Services is the provider for family treatment services and works closely with Children's Administration, they will

also be the contractor for this program.

Services include: providing chemical dependency assessments to Medicaid-eligible clients, assisting with screening clients for alcohol and drug use, providing case management services to help individuals access treatment and case monitoring of clients who are in treatment, providing consultation and training to Children's Administration staff about chemical dependency services, and other related duties.

Washington State Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral and Treatment (WASBIRT)

Funds awarded from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) for a five-year cooperative agreement.

The Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (DASA) is implementing the project in large hospital emergency departments across the state. The project will provide brief interventions, brief therapy, and referral to chemical dependency treatment for emergency department patients who screen positive for substance use disorders.

Project goals include:

- Maximize the number of emergency department patients with substance abuse problems who can be identified through screening.
- Deliver brief counseling, called "brief interventions," to patients who screen positive for substance use disorders.
- Increase referrals of chemically dependent people from the generalist medical setting to specialist chemical dependency treatment agencies.
- Reduce subsequent emergency department use rates, medical costs, criminal behavior, disability, and death for patients with alcohol and drug problems of all severity levels.

Thurston County will subcontract with Providence St. Peter Hospital's Chemical Dependency Center to implement the WASBIRT project locally.

Treatment Expansion

A much-needed state budget increase for chemical dependency treatment, supported by the Governor and the Legislature, became a reality on July 1, 2005.

This funding resulted from DASA research that showed large cost savings for acute medical care, prescription drugs, acute psychiatric care, and long-term care when patients received treatment for drug use disorders, compared to patients who needed this treatment but did not receive it.

The research also showed a large decrease in arrests for the treatment group compared to the non-treatment group.

The charts below outline the need for substance abuse related services for methamphetamine in 2005, as well as other substances.

Treatment Admissions – Outpatient Services January, 2005 – December, 2005 Thurston and Mason County	
Primary Substance	Outpatient
Alcohol	572
Cocaine	24
Heroin	48
Methamphetamine	367
Marijuana	478
Other	73
Total	1562

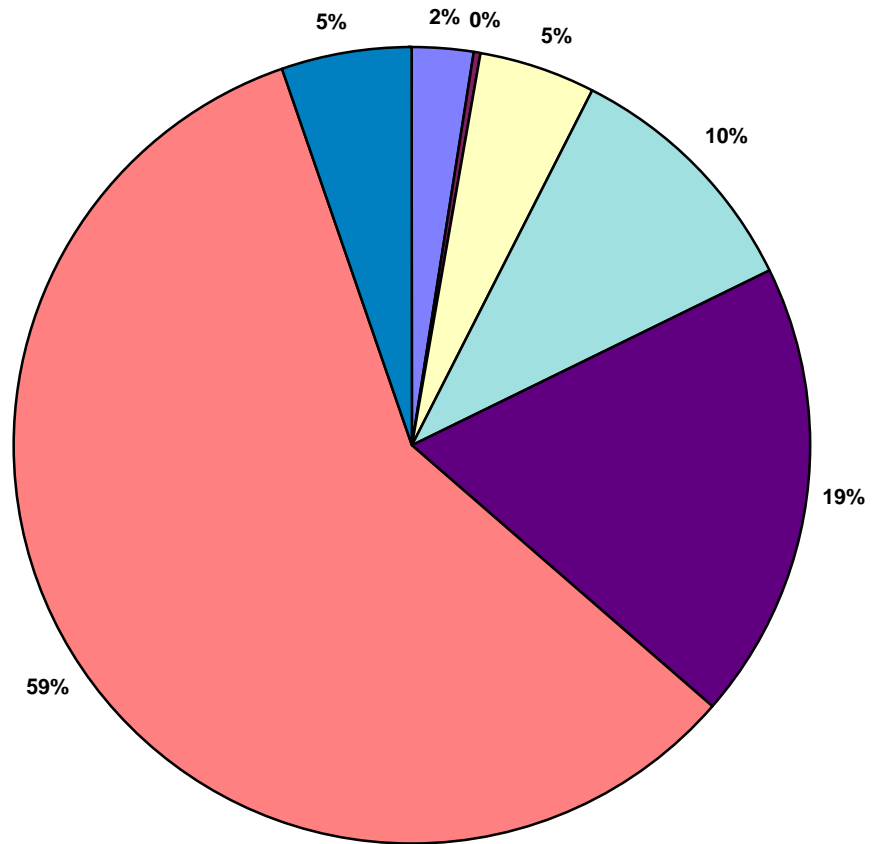
Outpatient Admissions – Meth Primary Substance January, 2005 – December, 2005		
Age	Mason	Thurston
Less than 18	10	56
18-29	42	92
30-44	36	94
45-54	8	11
55-64	3	0
65+	0	0
Total	99	253

Outpatient Admissions – Meth Primary Substance January, 2005 – December, 2005		
Age	Mason	Thurston
Youth	10	56
Adult	89	197

The figures demonstrate an increase in the number of younger meth users seeking treatment. Another emerging trend in 2005 is the use and abuse of prescription painkillers. Members of the Thurston County Methamphetamine Coalition have begun working with the medical community on the issue of "pharming": people visiting various doctors in the effort to obtain prescriptions for drugs that can later be abused or sold on the street. The treatment community has also noted an increase in the numbers of people seeking assistance with their problems with prescription narcotics.

Thurston County Drug Court continues to be a ray of hope for some addicted offenders. The intense 12 to 18 month program forces substance abusers to take responsibility for their own lives and to get off and stay off of drugs.

Thurston County Drug Court Program
Primary Drug Choice (as stated by participant)
(Graduated, Terminated, and Active Participants)



- Alcohol
- Benzodiazepines
- Cocaine/Crack
- Heroin
- Marijuana
- Methamphetamine
- Opiates (Pain Killers)

As you can see from the chart above, almost 60 percent of drug court participants still list methamphetamine as their drug of choice. That's why drug court's successes are all the more dramatic.

Statistics demonstrate the value of the drug court program. At the end of the year, 224 people had graduated from the program. Of those folks there were 25 new felony convictions or 11 percent. That group also committed 38 new misdemeanors or 17 percent. The numbers are quite different for the 202 people who were terminated from drug court. They were convicted of 74 new felonies or 37 percent and 81 new misdemeanor crimes or 40 percent. Even more dramatic is the difference for people who qualified for drug court but declined to take part. That group of 222 people was convicted of 178 new felonies, or 80 percent and 162 new misdemeanors or 73 percent.

The success of drug court has provided impetus for other, similar courts. Family Treatment Court and a Mental Health Court have been set up in Thurston County, modeled on the drug court design. (Drug Court could be included in the Law Enforcement section but is included in the treatment section because of its heavy accent on treatment and lifestyle accountability.)

Outreach and Prevention

The Outreach and Prevention subcommittee of the Thurston County Methamphetamine Coalition remained highly active in 2005. In January, a training session was given to owners and operators of retail outlets regarding new regulations covering the sale of precursor ingredients for the manufacture of meth. Feed and Farm stores were included in this training as well as small convenience stores.

The Thurston County Sheriff's Office Street Enforcement Team and Thurston County Environmental Health presented a training session on March 29th to landlords and property managers. The training included important information including-

- ❑ What goes into the creation of methamphetamine and the impacts of meth on users and the community.
- ❑ What a meth lab looks like so landlords might recognize one on their property.
- ❑ What goes into cleanup of property where a meth lab has been located.

More than 90 people attended the training including multi-housing managers and representatives of landlord associations.



Sheriff's Deputy Steve Hamilton explains meth labs during a 2005 training session.

In June of 2005, the Thurston County Meth Coalition worked with counterparts in Mason County to help host the Mason-Thurston

Methamphetamine Conference held at LittleCreek Casino near Shelton, Washington. More than 100 people from the two counties attended the one-day conference including Tribal representatives, law enforcement officers, treatment providers, environmental cleanup professionals, social services workers, court representatives and others. Breakout sessions at the conference included those on-

- ❑ Safety impacts for first responders.
- ❑ Drug Court.
- ❑ Environmental Cleanup.
- ❑ Addicts and treatment.
- ❑ Child Endangerment.
- ❑ Fraud and I D Theft.



A presentation on Drug Court at the June Mason-Thurston Meth Conference.

In November a presentation was given to government employees who work outside as part of their duties. **A total of 18 people from**

Washington State Parks, the State Department of Natural Resources and Thurston County Parks attended. They were shown the ingredients that go into meth manufacture, what the remnants of a lab might look like, how to deal with meth users they might come across and who to contact if they find a dumped lab.

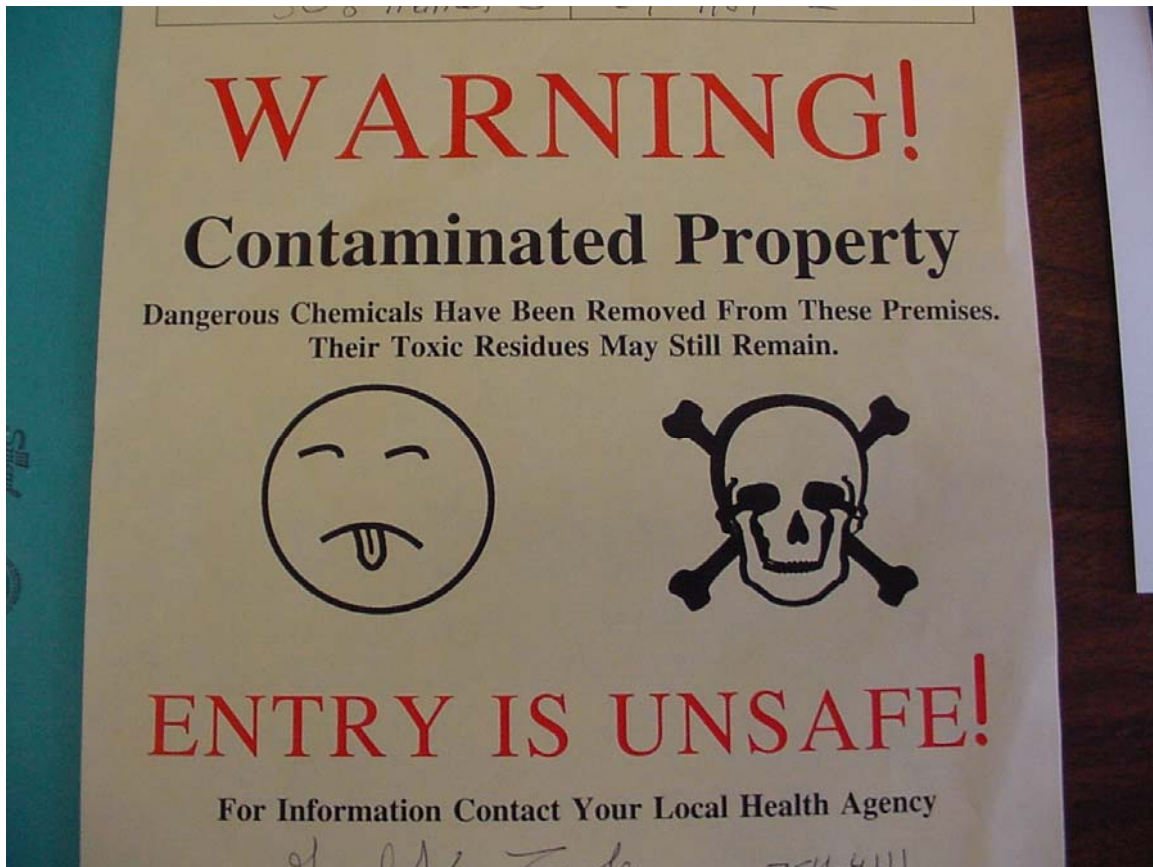
Thurston County's meth-related website, methmonster.org, (<http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/meth/>) continues to attract heavy use with more than 80,000 "hits" in 2005. The site provides information on methamphetamine use and impacts, treatment resources, local anti-meth activities and a lot more. Files were downloaded from the site more than 11,000 times and hundreds of users looked over the pages outlining how to seek addiction treatment. E-mails and phone calls received from site visitors indicate their appreciation for the ease of obtaining meth-related information and resources from the web.

An excellent relationship with the anti-violence, anti-drug abuse organization TOGETHER! helped to expand the outreach of the Meth Coalition again in 2005. TOGETHER! arranged for presentations on methamphetamine to three 9th grade health classes at Olympia High School. The organization was also instrumental in obtaining an anti-meth television ad, sponsoring its showing on local theater screens. The ad, which focused on "meth-mouth", was shown 80 times a day on 16 screens for 8 weeks. The spot also gave viewers information on links to TOGETHER! and to the methmonster web site. A program length version of the spot was shown on local access television.

Environmental Cleanup

With the reduction in the number of meth labs found in Thurston County comes a corresponding reduction in the need for cleanup of meth labs and dumpsites. However it remains a significant challenge

and some labs from years earlier are still not cleaned up, requiring continued monitoring and sometimes court action. More than a dozen properties were dealt with in 2005. In some cases, follow-up inspections by Thurston County Environmental Health were needed in order to ascertain whether the area was completely cleaned up. If so, the property can then be released for use by the owner. In other cases, it was determined that the property was being used despite being posted as "unfit". Referrals to the Thurston County Sheriff's Office were made in those situations. Environmental Health officials also met with Real Estate agents and private citizens regarding the possible sale of meth impacted properties and the safety of the site and/or what it would take to clean up a contaminated location.



In spite of warnings from Environmental Health and law enforcement, some property owners fail to comply with orders to clean up meth lab properties. In that case, suit is sometimes filed to force compliance. At the start of 2006, eight locations were posted

unfit for use by the Thurston County Health Officer. Locations included homes, sheds, mobile homes and trailers. Court orders may be sought in some instances if the correct clean up action is not taken.

In 2005, Environmental Health continued to work with local residents, the State Department of Ecology and others to safely remove toxic chemicals when dumpsites were discovered around the county. In most cases, the locations were in the rural areas and the chemicals were taken away for proper disposal.

Work Planned for 2006-07

The Thurston County Methamphetamine Coalition has several goals for 2006-07 including-

- An informational training session for doctors and dentists to alert them for signs of meth use and how to intervene before the individual becomes a chronic user.
- An expansion of community education regarding club drugs like ecstasy.
- Training for Hotel/Motel managers about the look and behavior of long time meth users and how to recognize when someone may be setting up a lab in a room. There would also be information on the cleanup of meth lab rooms.
- Work to keep federal, state and local policy makers up to date on the challenge of meth and other drugs in the community.
- Increased coordination regarding the impacts of fraud and identity theft crimes, many of which are related to meth use.
- Improve links to various community interests including the

business community.

- Increase outreach to underrepresented ethnic groups and area Indian Tribes.
- Increase intercounty & statewide cooperation.

In addition to the above-listed activities, the Coalition pledges to continue programs already established under the original Thurston County Methamphetamine Plan. Those programs include the work of Law Enforcement, Treatment agencies, Outreach and Prevention and Environmental Cleanup.

**Methamphetamine Information and Resources at the
MethMonster web site.**

http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/meth/meth_home.htm

**Methamphetamine Information Hotline
360-586-2800**

**Information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week,
courtesy of the Thurston/Mason Crisis Clinic.**
