

For Immediate Release

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To: Barron County Media Outlets

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Meth- How You Can Help

Ten years ago, most major interstates in the Midwest featured the, “Faces of Meth” billboards. The side-by-side, before-and-after mugshots showed in shocking clarity the devastating effects of methamphetamine (meth). Rotten and missing teeth, picked skin, scabbed over and sunken in faces, stared at many as they drove by. Today, methamphetamine is back in Barron County, but this time, with a slightly different look.

Trends in recent meth use show that more users are injecting the drug, which has somewhat lessened the number of users with “meth mouth.” Users also more commonly buy the drug from dealers rather than making it themselves in a meth lab. Previously, meth labs posed a dangerous threat to our community.

“Most of the meth is coming from the Twin Cities, stated Jason Hagen, Drug Investigator with the Barron County Sheriff’s Department. We aren’t seeing meth labs like we used to”.

Although the face of meth has changed, there are certain physical and social signs of Meth use that you should know. Recognizing these signs is the first step to helping someone in need.

- Incessant talking
- Psychotic behavior
- Paranoia
- Decreased appetite and unhealthy weight loss
- Unusual body odor, similar to ammonia or cat urine
- Burn marks on fingers or mouth
- Obsessively picking at hair or skin
- Strange sleeping patterns or not sleeping at all
- Engaging in repetitive meaningless tasks (like taking apart electronics or other household items for no apparent reason)
- Borrowing money often or stealing
- Changes in physical appearance, deterioration of hair, skin and teeth
- Missing school or work
- Changes in personality and/or friend groups

Young Children who are exposed to methamphetamine may also show some signs and symptoms.

- Hyperactivity
- Poor appetite or poor feeding
- Very sensitive to light, sound or other sources of stimulation
- Significant irritability
- Dislike of being touched or held
- Missing school
- Poor hygiene

If someone you know needs help, you suspect criminal activity or you believe a child may be in danger or is being neglected due to Meth use of a caregiver, call 715-537-METH.



“The meth hotline is a great tool for community members to help their friends, family and neighbors and ultimately make our communities a safer and healthier place for all, said Stacey Frolik, Director of Barron County Department of Health and Human Services. We encourage the community to use it and use it often. We cannot solve the meth problem in Barron County alone. We need help and this provides an easy way for the community to get involved”.

The Meth hotline is a voicemail based system. In case of an emergency always dial 911.

To learn more about the burden of methamphetamine in Barron County and what you can do to help, attend the Methamphetamine Town Hall Meeting on November 15, 2016 at 6:30 pm at Red Cedar Church in Rice Lake.

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