



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
HALEY BARBOUR, GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
STEVE SIMPSON, COMMISSIONER
BUREAU OF NARCOTICS
MARSHALL FISHER, DIRECTOR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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6-month-old law to combat methamphetamine production lauded

After just six months, a new law requiring a prescription for cold and sinus medicine containing pseudoephedrine has proved to be an effective deterrent to methamphetamine production in Mississippi.

“We averaged three or four labs a month in the three years I have served as sheriff. Since July 1, 2010, we have only had five labs,” said Jones County Sheriff Alex Hodge. “We are grateful to the Legislature for passing this.”

Harrison County, with 109 meth labs from July to December 2009, had the most of any county. From July to December 2010, Harrison County had only 13 meth labs.

“We are down easily 80 percent to 85 percent in meth-related arrests,” said Harrison County Sheriff Melvin Brisolara.

The head of the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, who led the push for the legislation, agrees.

“Something had to be done. At every level — law enforcement, courts, human services — our resources were maxing out, but the problem was not getting any better,” said MBN Director Marshall Fisher.

The new law replaced an outdated tracking law that required a buyer to show identification. “It slowed down meth production for awhile, but violators found ways to skirt it,” Director Fisher said.

By requiring a prescription, the new law aims to regulate pseudoephedrine, the key ingredient used to produce meth in Mississippi. And statistics show it is working.

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“Early results show a nearly 70 percent reduction in meth-related cases statewide. Now when we find pseudoephedrine at meth labs, it was purchased in surrounding states,” explained Director Fisher.

Figures from the MBN indicate officers worked 124 meth labs from July to December 2010, a 68 percent reduction from the 389 meth labs they worked from July to December 2009.

Officials removed 19 children from meth lab sites July to December 2010, a 76 percent reduction from the 80 children removed from meth lab sites July to December 2009.

“Other states are looking to follow Mississippi’s lead and pass the same law. This works; I hope they do,” Director Fisher said.

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