



U.S. Department of Justice

National Drug Intelligence Center

Request for Information

REQUESTOR: The Office of Senator Ron Wyden, Oregon

DATE: July 29, 2009

RFI NUMBER: 2009-183

REFERENCE: Pseudoephedrine Smurfing and Domestic Methamphetamine Production

This Request for Information (RFI) was initiated on July 23, 2009, at the request of Joel Shapiro, Counsel for Judiciary, Foreign Affairs, Immigration, Elections, Labor, Education and Nanotechnology in the Office of Senator Ron Wyden, Oregon. This RFI addresses the following request with information available to the National Drug Intelligence Center as of July 29, 2009.

Request: Please supply state level information that indicates where the greatest problems are with regard to pseudoephedrine smurfing and methamphetamine laboratories.

Response: Since late 2007, increasing numbers of individuals and criminal groups began forming organized pseudoephedrine smurfing operations. In fact, law enforcement officials from every region in the United States (Attachment 1) now report that smurfing is the primary means by which methamphetamine producers acquire pseudoephedrine. Although no national level data are available regarding smurfing operations, California appears to be the state with the greatest smurfing problem. In California, organized smurfing is fueling the current increase in Mexican drug trafficking organization superlab¹ activity, while a portion of the pseudoephedrine smurfed also is destined for superlabs in Mexico. Organized smurfing is also supplying the small-scale² local laboratories located throughout the country.

Based solely on national seizure data, Missouri, Tennessee, Alabama, Indiana, and Kentucky had the greatest number of methamphetamine laboratories seized in 2008, the latest full year for which data are available (Attachment 2).

¹ Methamphetamine superlabs are clandestine laboratories capable of producing 10 or more pounds per production cycle.

² Small-scale methamphetamine laboratories are generally capable of producing 1 pound or less of methamphetamine per production cycle.

Attachment 2

Reported Methamphetamine Laboratory Seizures, by State, 2004-2009,* Sorted by Greatest Number of Laboratory Seizures in 2008.

State	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
MISSOURI	1,112	713	400	427	490	278
TENNESSEE	1,007	520	599	400	412	187
ALABAMA	364	223	135	97	320	149
INDIANA	597	422	312	320	301	129
KENTUCKY	388	343	220	196	292	152
ARKANSAS	601	319	273	218	275	106
MICHIGAN	168	184	119	101	194	107
ILLINOIS	498	323	287	154	159	138
MISSISSIPPI	212	109	78	81	143	111
CALIFORNIA	518	271	212	125	116	35
IOWA	480	183	95	88	103	44
NORTH CAROLINA	241	174	88	70	90	43
FLORIDA	216	200	104	107	85	45
OHIO	173	178	102	77	84	53
OKLAHOMA	414	135	127	70	83	73
TEXAS	362	174	72	53	78	39
KANSAS	213	126	54	39	66	25
GEORGIA	215	204	111	52	58	12
NEW MEXICO	92	45	28	18	47	11
WEST VIRGINIA	102	102	62	32	37	21
SOUTH CAROLINA	136	107	56	17	30	27
COLORADO	147	95	62	43	26	10
WASHINGTON	489	211	81	62	26	9
NORTH DAKOTA	64	38	9	7	16	4
NEW YORK	33	19	30	12	14	2
OREGON	378	136	39	14	14	5
MINNESOTA	97	46	16	19	13	1
VIRGINIA	65	46	18	15	13	8
NEBRASKA	85	52	8	6	11	3
PENNSYLVANIA	64	31	29	9	8	1
ARIZONA	97	51	24	10	7	4
IDAHO	29	20	16	13	7	3

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LOUISIANA	81	39	13	37	7	13
NEVADA	51	29	20	8	6	3
UTAH	50	28	25	3	6	1
WISCONSIN	31	23	7		6	1
ALASKA	53	29	3	0	5	1
SOUTH DAKOTA	12	11	3	5	5	1
MAINE	3	3	3	0	2	0
MARYLAND	1	3	0	0	1	0
MONTANA	39	11	7	3	1	0
NEW JERSEY	2	3	5	1	1	0
WYOMING	19	9	4	2	1	0
CONNECTICUT	0	3	3	0	0	0
DELAWARE	3	0	0	0	0	0
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	1	0	0	0	0	0
HAWAII	10	9	4	0	0	0
MASSACHUSETTS	1	4	1	1	0	0
NEW HAMPSHIRE	2	6	2	1	0	0
RHODE ISLAND	0	0	1		0	0
VERMONT	1	1	0	1	0	0
Total	10,017	6,011	3,967	3,014	3,659	1,855*

Source: National Seizure System, run date July 24, 2009.

*Preliminary data