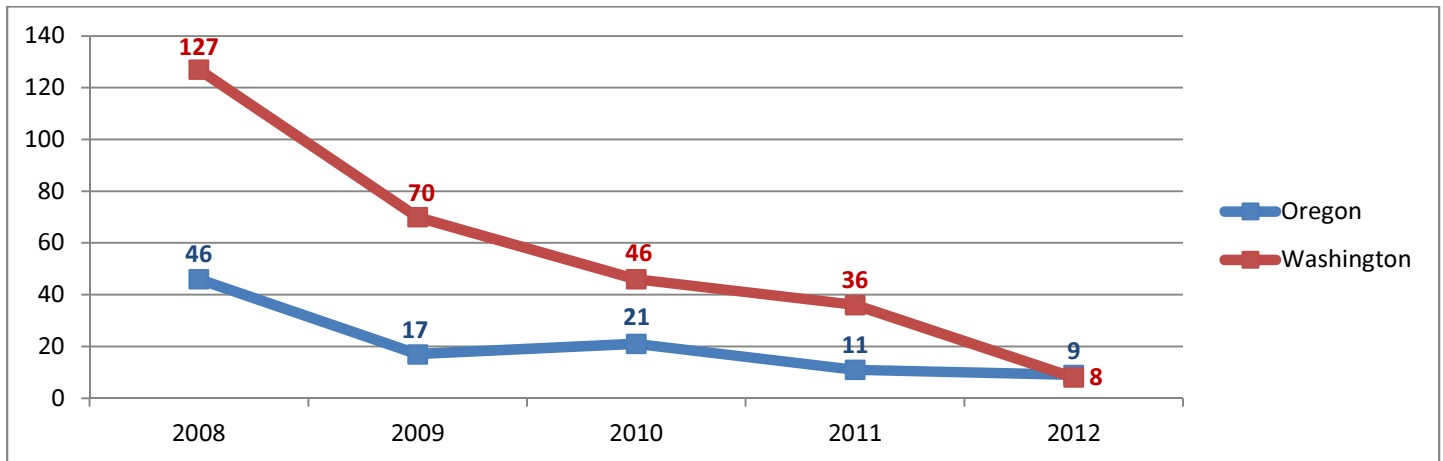


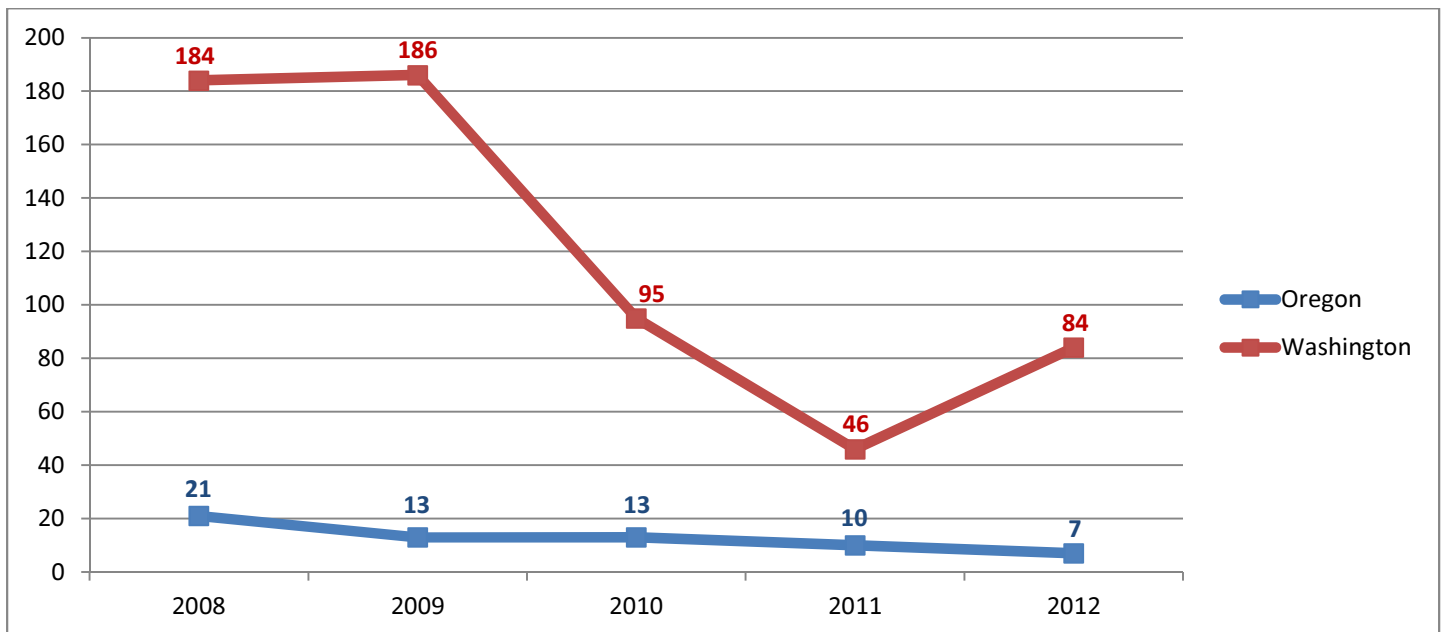
A comment on meth lab incident numbers

For years, I have repeatedly pointed out, in publications, editorials, and conversations, that it is never a good idea to use meth lab incident data published by the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) for state-to-state comparisons. The EPIC data is simply not reliable for that purpose. That is not the fault of EPIC or DEA. Their data is dependent upon accurate and consistent reporting by each state, which varies widely. Let's look at Oregon and Washington, for example. Oregon generally reports all clandestine drug lab incidents to EPIC, even less common labs, such as DMT and hash oil. Washington, on the other hand, does not comprehensively report their clandestine drug lab incidents to EPIC.

Based on the latest published EPIC data,ⁱ this is what a comparison of Oregon and Washington would look like over the past five years:



But here are the actual Oregon and Washington meth lab incident numbers over the past five years:ⁱⁱ



Rob Bovett, OADEC President

For more information, see www.oregondec.org/pse.htm

ⁱ See <http://www.justice.gov/dea/resource-center/meth-lab-maps.shtml>.

ⁱⁱ In Oregon, that data is collected and reported by the Oregon State Police and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA). In Washington, that data is collected by the Washington Department of Ecology, who is responsible for meth lab incident cleanup in Washington.