



Recognizing Meth Waste

As meth production spreads through Illinois, so does meth waste. With increasing frequency, Illinois residents are stumbling upon meth waste on roadsides and in ditches, fields, sewers, and streams. Because meth waste is toxic, volatile, and dangerous, you should learn to recognize and report it.

What to look for

How can you recognize meth waste? While meth waste takes a number of forms, and may be combined with common household waste, some of the telltale signs of meth waste are:

- **Powerful Odors** – Meth production creates strong odors that may smell like ammonia, ether, solvents, or vinegar. The odors may smell sweet or bitter.
- **Excessive Packaging** – Although the packages are from normal, everyday products such as cold medicine, excessive amounts of the packaging are a dead giveaway. Packaging to keep an eye on include:
 - Packaging from over-the-counter cold pills containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, such as Sudafed or Claritin
 - Packaging from Epsom salts or rock salt
- **Chemicals and Chemical Containers** – Meth production requires a variety of chemicals. Both the chemicals and their containers may be present in meth waste:
 - Coleman fuel containers, compressed gas cylinders, LP gas containers, or gas cans
 - Propane tanks, thermos bottles, coolers, or other cold storage containers (used to transport anhydrous ammonia)
 - Empty containers of antifreeze, white gas, ether, starting fluids, Freon, lye, drain opener, paint thinner, acetone, or alcohol, including those that have been punctured in the sides or bottom
 - Lithium batteries that have been torn apart
- **Makeshift Equipment and Protective Gear** – Meth cookers use a variety of makeshift equipment and protective gear when making meth. Some of the items that are likely to be found in meth waste include:
 - Respiratory masks or filters, dust masks, rubber gloves, clamps, funnels, hosing, or duct tape
 - Used coffee filters containing odd stains or powdery residue
 - Pyrex, Corning, or other glass containers or bakeware, especially if they are covered with powdery residue
 - Soda bottles or other bottles with holes in them and tubing coming out of them

What to do

STAY CALM. Keep your distance and never take matters into your own hands.

PROTECT YOURSELF. Realize that you may be looking at both a crime scene and a toxic waste dump. Do not touch the suspected meth waste, move it, clean it up, or tamper with it in any way. Once you have alerted law enforcement and any innocent bystanders, leave the scene and keep a safe distance.

PROTECT OTHERS. Alert any innocent bystanders who may be in imminent danger, such as children playing or laborers working close to the suspected meth waste.

ALERT LAW ENFORCEMENT. Alert local law enforcement authorities without delay.

please visit
www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov



Consumer Fraud Hotlines

Chicago
1-800-386-5438
TTY: 1-800-964-3013

Springfield
1-800-243-0618
TTY: 1-877-844-5461

Carbondale
1-800-243-0607
TTY: 1-877-675-9339