

# Cleaning Former Drug Labs

Your property is contaminated if it has been used for illegal manufacturing of a controlled substance such as amphetamine, methcathenone, LSD, ecstasy, PCP, GHB and the most commonly manufactured drug, methamphetamine.

Contamination can pose serious health and environmental dangers. These drugs can be manufactured in homes, apartments, garages and outbuildings using toxic household and agricultural chemicals that can explode or ignite without warning.

## My Property Was A Drug Lab. Now What?

- **DO NOT ENTER OR WORK** in/on the property until your Local Health Department or a clean up contractor listed by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) has identified all safety hazards.
- Contact your Local Health Department to find out the steps to make your property safe again.
- The Local Health Department will require you to clean up your property and may have additional requirements.
- Contact local law enforcement for any available information about the lab.

## What Do I Have To Do?

- You must clean up your property before you:
  - reoccupy it;
  - allow anyone else to occupy it;
  - sell it.
- Failure to clean your property leaves you open to liability for injury to others from exposure to dangerous chemicals.
- Department of Child Services cannot return children to your property until it has been cleaned up.



## Who Can Clean My Property?

- You must use an IDEM certified cleanup contractor to clean the property and certify it has been properly cleaned.
- IDEM listed contractors ("Qualified Inspectors") have the training, experience, and equipment to clean the property safely and cost effectively.
- IDEM lists certified cleanup contractors on its website at: [http://www.in.gov/idem/programs/land/drug\\_lab/](http://www.in.gov/idem/programs/land/drug_lab/)

## What Will The Cleanup Contractor Do?

- An initial assessment, which may include testing, to determine the level of contamination and what cleanup procedures need to be done.
- Work with you to determine the best and most cost effective way to clean the property.
- Clean the property or supervise the cleanup to ensure it meets all requirements.
- Properly dispose of all waste from the cleanup.
- Test the property, once cleanup is complete, to confirm it meets the state's cleanup level.
- Give you a "Certificate of Decontamination" that certifies the property has been properly cleaned.

For more information on meth and related concerns, contact the Meth Free Indiana:  
[www.methfreeindiana.org](http://www.methfreeindiana.org)  
(877) 855-METH

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## Can I Do The Work Myself?

- Generally, no because there may be existing conditions that require specific safety precautions.
- IDEM cleanup contractors understand the safety risks of working in former drug labs & will do everything they can to keep you safe. Follow the contractor's safety advice!
- Talk to your cleanup contractor. They may allow you to do some of the work under their supervision.
- If the contractor agrees to let you do some work, **follow all of the instructions you are given!**
- **DO NOT** do any cleanup without first talking to your cleanup contractor; some work you do can complicate the cleanup or interfere with the testing.

**NOTE:** Contractors will not certify work they did not do themselves or have agreed for you to do under their supervision.

## What Does Clean Mean?

- The approved cleanup level for controlled substances is  $0.5\mu\text{g}/100\text{cm}^2$ .
- Once the cleanup of the property is complete, the certified contractor will test the property using standard sampling procedures and laboratory analysis.
- Cleanups involving removal of potentially contaminated materials (tear-outs) may not require testing.

## Who Pays For The Cleanup?

- Property owners are responsible for all cleanup costs.
- Check with your insurance carriers to see if they will cover some or all of the costs.



## What Cleanup Method Can I Use?

- Cleanup methods depend upon the level of contamination. Some methods are ineffective or very expensive if the property is heavily contaminated.
- In some cases, where there is very little or no contamination, the property can be cleared after testing.
- The most common cleanup methods are:
  - painting or sealing all interior surfaces;
  - washing all interior surfaces;
  - removing all potentially contaminated materials.
- Some property owners have found tearing out the interior and rebuilding it is more cost-effective than washing. Washing often must be repeated to be effective; rebuilt properties often may be certified clean without testing.
- Cleanups can be very expensive, and some properties are much more difficult to clean than others. If your property has a low value and is heavily contaminated or difficult to clean, it may be more cost-effective to demolish the structure.

For more information about Title 318 IAC cleanup rule visit:

Indiana Department of Environmental Management  
[http://www.in.gov/idem/programs/land/drug\\_lab/](http://www.in.gov/idem/programs/land/drug_lab/)  
(317) 232-4535 or (317) 233-1655  
<http://www.in.gov/idem/4178.htm>  
Find your local health department at:  
[http://www.in.gov/isdh/links/local\\_dep/index.htm](http://www.in.gov/isdh/links/local_dep/index.htm)

# Cleanup process:

