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Drug Enforcement Administration (Omaha Field Division)
Federal Bureau of Investigation
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Law Enforcement Partnership in Nebraska Takes Stance Against Methamphetamine

KEARNEY, Neb. – In response to the increasing amount of methamphetamine seen threatening Nebraskans, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies in Nebraska have formed a coalition to help combat the number one drug threat in both rural and urban communities across the state.

Nebraska Attorney General, Doug Peterson; Interim U.S. Attorney for the District of Nebraska, Jan Sharp; Drug Enforcement Administration Omaha Division Special Agent in Charge, Justin C. King.; Federal Bureau of Investigation Omaha Field Office Special Agent in Charge Eugene Kowel and Investigator Tyler Kroenke, representing Nebraska State Patrol, announced their partnership at a press conference Wednesday afternoon at the Kearney Police Department.

While in Kearney, these agencies, along with local and tribal law enforcement partners, are engaging in a Drug Forum as a way to exchange ideas and best practices on how to turn the tide against the scourge of methamphetamine.

“A leading goal of this partnership is to sound the alarm that meth use continues to spread across our state,” Nebraska Attorney General Doug Peterson said. “We want citizens to be fully informed about the dangers of meth consumption and understand the destruction it brings to communities.”

The amount of methamphetamine seized in Nebraska has surged 293 percent in the last five years with law enforcement agencies combining for approximately 768 pounds in 2021. Total nationwide methamphetamine seizures increased 77 percent from 2018-2019, the most recent data available.

“While fentanyl and opioids dominate the headlines, it’s important that we don’t lose sight of the threat of methamphetamine,” DEA Omaha Division Special Agent in Charge Justin C. King said. “This highly addictive substance is destroying families in Nebraska and crossing our state borders in alarming amounts. We want people to be aware that methamphetamine is a dangerous drug with life-altering consequences.”

The synthetic substance primarily produced by transnational criminal organizations in Mexican mega-labs is hitting the streets of Nebraska at a purity and potency in the upper 90th percentile. Today's Mexican methamphetamine is deadlier, easier to access and roughly 69 percent cheaper than it was in 2005, leading to tragic impacts for Nebraska families and communities.

"The trafficking of methamphetamine is not a victimless crime. Meth is exceptionally destructive, it wreaks havoc in our communities, and the people selling and trafficking it should see this initiative as a warning," Federal Bureau of Investigation Omaha Field Office Special Agent in Charge Eugene Kowel said. "We will not stand idly by and watch our neighborhoods degrade due to the influx of drugs like meth and the corresponding violence. We are committed to working together with our local, state, tribal, and federal partners to investigate and hold accountable the people and networks responsible for bringing meth into our Nebraska communities."

"Our prosecutions of meth dealers continue to rise," Interim U.S. Attorney for the District of Nebraska Jan Sharp said. "The methamphetamine that arrives in Nebraska is distributed and sold by gangs that routinely use guns and violence to conduct their illegal activities. We are attacking this problem in a concerted approach with local, state and federal agencies."

For more information on the coalition and the threat of methamphetamine in our Nebraska communities, please visit <https://ago.nebraska.gov/life-or-meth>. To speak with the Nebraska Attorney General, U.S. Attorney for the District of Nebraska, Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation or Nebraska State Patrol, please contact the respective Public Information Officer as noted at the top of this release.

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