

Crime Prevention and Restorative Justice
Alberta Crime Prevention Week
2012 Alberta Crime Prevention Awards
2011 Crime Prevention Award Winners
Restorative Justice Grants
Related Agencies
Community Awareness
AMBER Alert Program in Alberta
Serious and Violent Offenders
Family Violence
Safety Tips
Hosting Crime Prevention Events
Priority Prolific Offender Program
Illegal Drugs
Safer Communities and Neighborhoods (SCAN)
Alberta Sheriff Highway Patrol
ALERT

Questions and Comments

Let us know what you think

Common Questions



## Illegal Drugs

Today, the three most common drugs in the average community are [marijuana](#), [cocaine](#) and [crystal methamphetamine](#) (meth, for short).

When many people think about a community's drug problem, the first thing that comes to mind is the use of drugs by individuals and the related problems. What can affect a community a lot more, is the rather hidden drug problem – that of manufacturing the drugs.

There is actually little manufacturing to do with cocaine in the community, apart from converting the basic powdered drug to the more potent "base or rock" form. This involves heating the drug in small quantities.

The growing of marijuana (typically done in houses or garages and sheds in any community) poses more danger to the neighborhood. As with any plant, growing marijuana requires light and warmth. Powerful lights which simulate sunshine are commonly used and they require a lot of electricity. Persons doing the growing often bypass the electrical meter to save the cost of the power and to avoid detection. Frequently, they install make-shift wiring, which can be a fire hazard to the house and surrounding homes.

The most dangerous manufacturing occurring in neighborhoods is that of crystal methamphetamine. Producing meth involves combining and heating many explosive and toxic chemicals that result in toxic waste leftovers, which are often disposed of unsafely.

Neighborhoods where meth is being produced are at risk from fire, explosion and chemical contamination of both air and water. Currently, some meth manufacturing operations, so called "meth labs", have been scaled down to the point that they will fit in the trunk of a vehicle. This makes them completely portable, which in turn makes them both more dangerous and also harder for law enforcement to find.

Signs of possible drug manufacture (and or sale) in a neighborhood home can include:

- Little or no sign of residents at the home, especially outside.
- Conversely, a lot of activity and many vehicles coming and going at all hours.
- Windows boarded up or covered over – frequently with aluminum foil.
- Excessive visits to garages or other buildings on the property.
- Excessive amounts of trash on garbage day.
- Conversely, little or no trash on garbage day.

If drug manufacturing or sale is suspected, the matter should be reported to the police. Individuals should not attempt further investigation themselves.

To obtain additional information about drugs, treatment options and prevention programs, contact the [Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission](#) for assistance.