

**Procedure  
3.32**

**EFFECTIVE  
DATE  
7-14-06**

**Eugene  
Police Department**



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## **Illegal Drug Labs**

### **3.32.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This policy is designed to protect the safety of the public and responding personnel by outlining procedures for response to illegal laboratories used to manufacture methamphetamine or other substances where the substances produced, or the process and/or materials used to produce them, are potentially hazardous to humans.

Part I – Responsibilities and Procedures for Department Personnel

- A. Definitions
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Part II – Responsibilities and Procedures for Response Personnel

- A. Generally
- B. Fixed-site labs
- C. Boxed/backpack labs

### **3.32.2 RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL**

#### **A. Definitions**

1. *Contaminated*: Exposed by direct contact, ingestion, or inhalation to chemicals or equipment.
2. *Hazardous materials*: Substances which present a danger to humans who are exposed to them.
3. *IDLRT*: Interagency Drug Lab Response Team, comprised of personnel from EPD and surrounding agencies who have been trained to respond to clandestine or illegal drug labs.
4. *Illegal laboratory*: Apparatus and chemicals that have been or which could be used to unlawfully manufacture a controlled substance.

5. *Lab Team:* Vice/Narcotics Unit (VNU) and/or other personnel who are trained to safely and effectively handle an illegal laboratory.

## **B. Procedures**

1. When you discover an illegal drug lab or associated hazardous materials:
  - a. Notify your supervisor and request additional personnel.
  - b. Do not enter an involved building unless a life-threatening situation exists. If you elect to enter in such a situation, leave the building as soon as possible.
  - c. Remove everyone to safety. For labs of significant size, or for a location with a significant quantity of hazardous materials, people should be removed to a location upwind and at least 300 feet away from the contaminated location. Advise persons that no smoking is allowed within 500 feet of the location.
  - d. Establish a perimeter and prevent access by unauthorized persons.
  - e. If the lab is active, call for a fire unit to stand by.
  - f. Do not change the condition of anything at the lab site (e.g., light switches, burners, other devices or settings).
  - g. Request that a supervisor notify VNU, other EPD Lab Team personnel, and/or the IDLRT. That notification should include the following information:
    - Exact location of the lab, including the type of structure
    - Whether or not the lab is operational
    - Number of suspects in custody, and their location
    - Any injuries which have been sustained
  - h. Follow applicable legal requirements regarding search for and seizure of evidence.
2. If you inadvertently enter what is subsequently determined to be an illegal drug lab, remain at the scene but leave the structure and wait for further instructions and decontamination, if needed.
3. If a suspect is taken into custody, consult with Lab Team personnel about what decontamination measures, if any, are needed for him or her. If the suspect is being transported to any detention, hospital, or other facility, place him or her in

protective clothing prior to the transport and advise receiving personnel of the circumstances of the suspect's exposure to hazardous chemicals.

4. Complete an "Exposure Incident Report Form" if you have been exposed to hazardous substances (refer General Order 201.5.)

### **3.32.3 RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES FOR RESPONSE PERSONNEL**

#### **A. Generally**

1. A supervisor must authorize call-out of VNU or other Lab Team personnel.
2. VNU will search areas allowed by permission, warrant, or other legal authority.
3. Responding Lab Team personnel will:
  - a. Notify SWAT or other non-team personnel about safety considerations before anyone enters the scene of the lab. Lab Team personnel are responsible for the safety of all persons at any such scene.
  - b. Utilize appropriate protective equipment.
  - c. Collect evidence and ensure proper disposal of any hazardous materials.
  - d. Determine the need for decontamination of suspects, responding officers, and any other persons who may have been exposed to the hazardous chemicals.
  - e. Ensure that involved premises are secured and posted with appropriate warnings to prevent entry by unauthorized persons.

#### **B. Fixed-site labs**

1. Act as safety officers for all incidents involving hazardous materials.
2. Establish a "hot zone" area of contamination for employee safety.
3. Establish decontamination capabilities on scene, as required by OSHA.
4. Conduct any air sampling required.

**C. Boxed/backpack labs**

1. Lab Team personnel may choose to secure the lab at a designated chemical storage facility for processing at a more appropriate time and in a safer environment. In making that decision, consider:
  - a. Whether it is safe to transport the lab to another location.
  - b. Any hazardous conditions which may exist at the location of the lab seizure (e.g., traffic, weather, terrain, safety of officers and others, potential threats from suspects.)
2. Lab Team personnel assessing and/or transporting labs must use appropriate safety equipment.
3. Any lab which is leaking, emitting fumes, is in containers which would be unsafe to transport, or would be unsafe to transport for any other reason will be secured and investigated at the scene.
4. If the Lab Team determines that the lab is safe for transport, the lab must be secured and transported in the bed of a vehicle such as a pickup or trailer.
5. The lab may not be transported in the passenger compartment of any vehicle.
6. The lab must be secured by a cargo net or other apparatus to avoid shifting and the potential release of hazardous chemicals.