



**Meth Detection  
Australia**



Your guide to  
protecting your  
property from  
methamphetamine  
contamination

# What this Booklet is about

This booklet is to help you to understand how potential methamphetamine contamination can damage your home or contents, and how we've developed our testing and reporting practices to respond to this growing public Health issue.

Its important for landlords, homeowners, and property managers to understand their responsibilities when it comes to this issue. You'll also find advice on how to identify and deal with the risk posed by levels of Meth Contamination.

## Bringing together technology & systems to deal with an escalating problem

The use of methamphetamine has become widespread in the community and now exceeds the use of more traditional drugs. Unfortunately, the use and manufacture of "meth" results in the contamination of property. Such contamination presents a health hazard to (generally) unsuspecting occupiers, and may require significant remediation with associated costs. The community is slowly becoming aware of the issue, but with little understanding of the possible consequences of "Meth contamination", and options for testing, assessment and remediation. Meth Detection Australia was established to work with Real Estate Agencies, Landlords and Tenants, testing, assessing and coordinating through to decontamination.

# What you need to know about meth

## What is Meth?

- Meth contamination is the residue and by-products left on surfaces after meth has been used (smoked), manufactured, distributed or stored within a property.
- These contaminants can easily be absorbed into building materials, fixtures, fittings and household items.
- Anybody that comes into contact with meth contaminants can ingest the meth through their skin, or by touching contaminated surfaces then transferring the chemicals to their mouth, nose, or eyes.
- The presence of meth at low levels does not necessarily pose an identified health risk.
- That's why our testing practices are designed in accordance with Australian guidelines and only require the cost of decontaminating or replacing items where a clear health risk is identified. We are guided by and regularly review the most recent health information.

## What to do if you suspect your property is being used as a meth lab

Meth labs can be extremely dangerous safety first

**What to do if you suspect the property has been used as a meth lab.**

### DO

- Evacuate everyone immediately and call the police.
  - Stay outside.

### DON'T

- Do not turn any electrical device on or off, such as lights or a fan, as this could trigger an explosion.
  - Do not shut off the water supply to the property.
    - Do not try to stop a chemical reaction.
- Do not smoke in or near a meth lab or use a cell phone or other device that might cause a spark.
  - Do not try to move the lab or materials or clean the property.
    - Evacuate everyone immediately and call the police.
      - Stay outside.

It's hard to 'see' meth use in a home, but continuous use will leave a build-up of contamination on surfaces.

**If you do suspect contamination, please contact a Meth Detection Australia testing Tech immediately. They'll advise how to determine if there is contamination, and the next steps in the process.**

- Only a professional meth test will confirm whether your house has been contaminated by meth.
- You'll need to arrange a test to identify if there's any contamination that you need to address.
- Please contact [info@methdetectionaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@methdetectionaustralia.com.au).



**Meth Detection  
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# How Real Time Reporting **Protects** your property investment

Create accountability by recording the condition of your property at regular times.

- Meth Detection Australia is not limited to rental properties. It includes all occupancies, which means owner-occupied homes and holiday houses too.
- Meth Detection Australia's reports are, date and time stamped to provide peace of mind when letting property. Limiting your liability and providing clean housing protects your tenants and property protect managers too.

## Types of Lab testing Available

We offer a range of meth screening services, so that you can choose the type of screening that is most appropriate for your situation. Our screening services are conducted using the NIOSH Method 9111 (methamphetamine on wipes by liquid chromatography – mass spectrometry).



## • Base Composite Screen

In a Base Composite Screen, the field sampling technician takes multiple samples from throughout the property they insert the swab samples into a single test tube. The purpose of this screen is to assert and validate for the client whether there is any traces of methamphetamine present.

If the accumulative result of the samples indicates the presence of meth above  $0.5\mu\text{g}/100\text{cm}^2$ , we would need to complete a detailed forensic assessment to establish & isolate which rooms require decontamination.

**POSITIVES:** As the screening company is only being charged for sending minimal test tubes to the laboratory the cost to the client is lower

**NEGATIVES:** Because all swab samples are inserted into the same sample test tube there is no way of knowing which area holds contamination so there is a need to re-visit the property to gather individual samples if the original screen shows contamination.

## Laboratory Composite Forensic Assessment

This type of Screening is similar to a detailed forensic assessment where a field sampling technician takes individual swab samples in adherence with NIOSH 9111. Samples are taken from every room and each sample is held in its own tube. Samples are analysed together at the lab, to provide an average reading for the entire property. If the reading is above  $0.5\mu\text{g}/100\text{cm}^2$ , individual samples can be re-analysed (at an additional cost per sample) to establish which rooms have the problem. There is no need to revisit the property on this occasion.

**POSITIVES:** Because the swab samples are already held individually at the laboratory, should the batch show contamination the laboratory can quickly re-run the samples individually to give you a breakdown of contamination on each sample without the need for a field sampling technician to re-visit the property.

**NEGATIVES:** The initial cost of the laboratory composite is more expensive than a Base composite screen so this type of test is normally designed for clients who already have a suspicion there is contamination within the property.

## Detailed Forensic Assessment

This type of screening is required when a Base Composite Screen reveals a result above  $0.5\mu\text{g}/100\text{cm}^2$ . Analysing rooms individually will identify which rooms require decontamination. Samples are taken from each room for individual analysis. The property at this stage is deemed unsafe and extra precaution is taken by our field sampling technicians. THIS SCREENING IS ALSO CARRIED OUT POST DECONTAMINATION TO CLEAR A PROPERTY PRIOR TO A CLEARANCE BEING ISSUED

### **POSITIVES:**

Establishing 100% where the contamination is present inside the property will insure the clean-up costs are accurate and no excess is spent. More than 50% of cases the contamination is isolated to only a limited area in the property which saves thousands in clean-up costs knowing where the contamination is present.

### **NEGATIVES:**

Every room in the property needs a swab sample taken which adds to the screening cost.

If you're not sure which type of screening service would be best for your situation, ask us for advice. We can make a recommendation based on whether the chances of finding meth residue are high, medium or low, based on what you know about the building's history.



## Rental properties are most exposed to the risk of meth contamination

**It's important that landlords manage their rental properties to a highest standard.**

Landlords everywhere need to understand the importance of educating themselves on meth use in rental properties, especially on the physical dangers and the potential financial impact they inadvertently expose themselves to. Many cities across Australia are seeing a decrease in actual meth lab busts HOWEVER drug imports through customs is at an all-time high resulting in rising use of methamphetamine, or meth / ice use in all property.

When people move into a dwelling they are most likely to be unaware of previous illicit operations. These individuals may have family members who include infants and young children, are pregnant, elderly, frail or have compromised health, placing them at increased risk. Meth contamination may persist for years on all surfaces in the home, including within the building materials.

**All property should be tested as part of smart landlord due diligence.**



# Keep it in check

## How to go about meth testing

Meth Detection Australia recommends testing at the beginning of a Management/Lease renewal, at 6mths and at the end of a tenancy.

Let your clean property to trusted tenants with peace of mind

- By providing a clean meth tested property when new tenants commit to a lease will provide you with confidence and peace of mind. In the event there is an issue at some stage in the future you'll be able to establish when the contamination happened.
- In the event your property is contaminated Meth Detection Australia can establish the level of contamination, if required organize, execute a remedial action plan (RAP) and provide clearance test with report.

Here's a few **warning signs** that you should look for during periodical & final inspections

Ammonia or solvent smells, Windows covered in plastic or tin foil

Portable gas tanks or other cylinders not normally seen or used in the area.

Chemical stains around household kitchen sinks, laundry, bathroom or storm water drains. Yellow/brown/pink staining of interior floor, wall, ceiling & appliance surfaces Extra or over-the-top security systems or other devices

Dead or dying vegetation/ lawns in outdoor areas (continued on next slide).

Chemical containers stored or stock piled, Glass equipment and cookware that is

stained, Plastic or glass containers fitted with glass or rubber tubing. The presence of numerous cold tablet packages, A disproportionate amount of rubbish for the number of people living in the home. Increased activity, especially at night (neighbors usually reporting this to the agency). Unusual structures, such as a lean-to on the back of the house and use of tarpaulins. Renters insisting on paying their rent in cash, Having a friendly chat with the neighbors can help you find out about any unusual activity on the property when you're not around.

***Call the police immediately.***

A number of insurance companies do cover use and manufacture,

These two insurance companies, actively advise and acknowledge this growing problem

Aon Landlord Insurance, [www.sgua.com.au](http://www.sgua.com.au)

Contact Meth Detection Australia for further information on how we can put a Meth Management system in place to protect your asset from contamination.

Website. [www.methdetectionaustralia.com.au](http://www.methdetectionaustralia.com.au)

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## Protection of Family and Assets