

NEWS RELEASE



Nonprescription Drug Manufacturers Association of Canada

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Industry, retailers and government continue collaboration on measures to curb clandestine methamphetamine production.

Ottawa, Ontario - July 5, 2004 – Representatives of the self-care health products industry (NDMAC) and retailer organizations (including the Canadian Association of Chain Drug Stores and the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors) are collaborating with Health Canada on the development of proactive measures to curb the clandestine manufacture of methamphetamine.

Methamphetamine (“crystal meth” or “speed”) is a powerfully addictive and destructive illicit drug. Health Canada has worked with law enforcement and industry to introduce a series of regulatory measures aimed at curbing the diversion at the manufacturer/wholesaler level of precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. Following on the successful implementation of these measures, the focus is now shifting to preventing the diversion of these products at the retail level.

Many of the precursor chemicals used in methamphetamine manufacture are found in common household products. Some of these products are used for the relief of cold, flu and allergy symptoms and play a critical role in reducing the burden these illnesses place on Canada’s health care system. The self-care health products industry, pharmacy and grocery retailers are committed to preventing the diversion of these legitimate and important consumer products for illicit purposes.

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Although there is no information available to indicate that the diversion of cold, flu and allergy medicines from retail stores is a significant component in clandestine methamphetamine manufacture, all sectors have agreed to approach this issue proactively. Health Canada has set aside funding to develop an information program. The program will be designed to prevent the theft and suspicious sale of precursors by increasing retail employee and management awareness of their potential use in clandestine methamphetamine production. The retail and self-care health product sectors have pledged their support and will bring their expertise and resources to bear on making the program another successful step toward reducing the health and social damage caused by methamphetamine.

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