

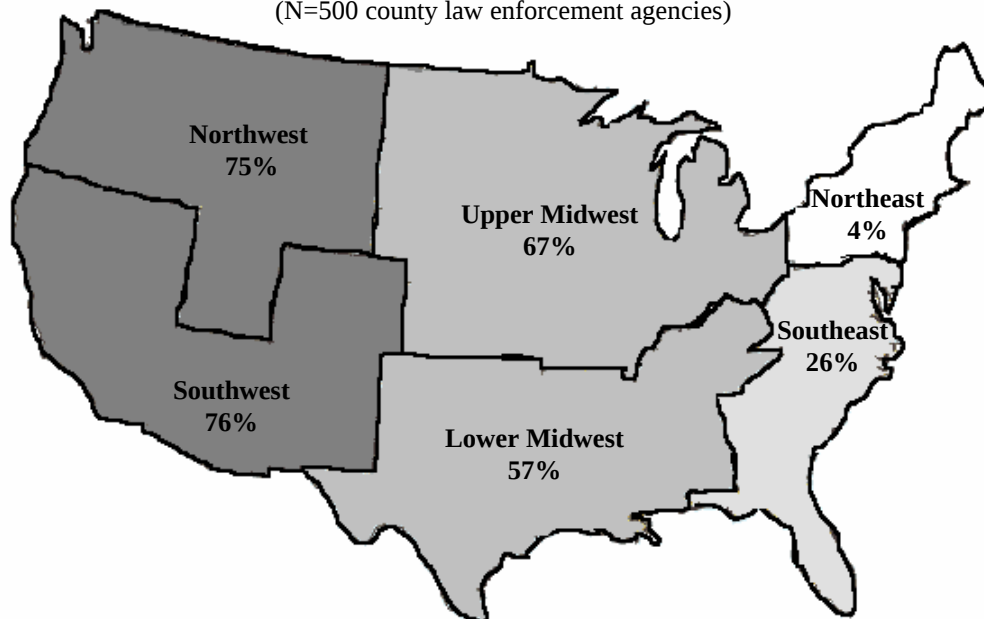
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Methamphetamine Named Top Problem by Majority of County Law Enforcement Agencies in Western U.S.; Will the East Follow?

More than one-half of 500 county law enforcement agencies in the U.S. report that methamphetamine is their primary drug problem, according to a recent survey conducted by the National Association of Counties.* Three-fourths of law enforcement agencies in the Northwest and Southwest part of the country reported that, based on drug-related arrests in the last year, methamphetamine was the biggest problem in their county. More than one-half of responding agencies in the Upper Midwest (67%) and Lower Midwest (57%) reported the same. In contrast, around one-fourth of agencies in the Southeast and only 4% of those in the Northeast reported methamphetamine as their number one drug problem. While these findings support previous research indicating that the West and Midwest have been hit hardest by methamphetamine use (see *CESAR FAX*, Volume 14, Issue 12), they also suggest that the Eastern U.S. should be vigilant for any increase in methamphetamine-related problems.

Percentage of County Law Enforcement Agencies Reporting That Methamphetamine Is the Biggest Problem in Their County, by Region, 2005
(N=500 county law enforcement agencies)



NOTE: Methamphetamine has historically been found in rural counties, which typically have smaller populations. More than three-fourths (81.6%) of the county law enforcement agencies responding to this survey were from counties with a population of less than 50,000. (In comparison, 70.1% of all counties in the U.S. have a population of less than 50,000.) Thus, the counties reporting a methamphetamine problem may actually represent a relatively small percentage of the U.S. population.

*Surveys were conducted by Research, Inc., of Washington, D.C., with 500 county law enforcement agencies from 45 states (Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island did not respond to the survey).

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from National Association of Counties, *The Meth Epidemic in America: Two Surveys of U.S. Counties*, 2005. Available online at <http://www.naco.org>.

• 301-405-9770 (voice) • 301-403-8342 (fax) • CESAR@cesar.umd.edu • www.cesar.umd.edu •

CESAR FAX is supported by BYRN 2004-1206, awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice through the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention. CESAR FAX may be copied without permission. Please cite CESAR as the source.