

METH | Missouri continues fight against drugs

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She said the physical changes are so severe that health care workers can easily pick out suspected addicts at local establishments.

Not only does methamphetamine cause serious health problems, including heart failure, rotting teeth, liver damage and scars, it also affects an entire community.

Burglaries and automobile accidents increase, along with new problems, like lab explosions and violent encounters with paranoid addicts, Sanford said.

"I've worked with meth addicts who have said they would go to Brashear, steal the anhydrous [ammonia, an ingredient] in their mother's car and make this while they were driving," Sanford said. "... I worked with a meth addict who used to take a loaded gun into [a local store] with the idea that if anyone got in his way, he was going to shoot them."

She said for each pound of methamphetamine, five to six pounds of toxic waste are created. Often, addicts dump these chemicals in their yards, which could lead to potential acid burns from contaminated grass. Once a meth lab is seized and its residents taken into custody, the home must be cleaned by the property owner before re-entering the market.

"However, it's my understanding that the state of Missouri has no specific requirement for what constitutes cleaning," Sanford said. "If someone has been making meth in your neighborhood, who wants to buy a house there?"

Adair County Chief Deputy Larry Logston confirmed there are no regulations for lab cleanup in Kirksville. Five Adair officers have clandestine laboratory certification. These officers transport hazardous chemicals to the collection site.

"So far as actually decontaminating the house, we don't have anyone who does that," Logston said. "So it's pretty important to check a house out before you buy it."

Dropping property values are just a tiny part of the financial burden for taxpayers that methamphetamine addiction causes, Sanford said.

"You're paying for cleanup," she said. "You're paying for increased incarceration, you're paying for addicts' dentures because they don't have the money and here's a person, a taxpayer without medical insurance, having to pay for somebody else's dental work. That makes most people upset." Motivations like these are what

have provoked the countywide effort to combat methamphetamine addiction.

While the rest of the nation experienced a 300 percent increase in meth use in the last three years, Hughes said by some estimates, Kirksville's level of both lab seizures and meth-related arrests has dropped as much as 80 percent. Although Adair County claimed 60 lab seizures in 2003, in 2004 there were just 12 apprehended, and so far in 2005, the county has only seen six.

The Adair County Meth Coalition, which was founded in July 2003, can take partial credit for this success, he said. The coalition, which encompasses representatives from law enforcement, treatment centers, the drug court and the prosecutor's office, as well as community members, was just awarded a nearly \$100,000 federal grant for the second year in a row.

The coalition presents drug education in Adair schools, sponsors knock-and-talks for local officers and provides signage and training for retailers, among other activities.

According to the 2004 CORE Drug and Alcohol Survey, methamphetamine usage is low at Truman. About 1 percent of students have answered positively to "crack" use, which includes both meth and cocaine, in 2003 and 2004.

The grant's Choices Have Consequences program has allowed law officers to work overtime saturation patrols. According to a press release from the sheriff's office, it was this practice that led to a narcotics bust June 29. The bust led to the arrest of three men, one from Kirksville, who were carrying more than a pound of marijuana, methamphetamine and other drugs.

"But we can't just rest on our laurels," Hughes said. "If we stop, in three years it'll be at the same level it was, and we'll say, 'Gosh, I wish we had kept it up.'"

He said it is the community attitude that has changed so drastically. "I don't think that our efforts have significantly changed those people who were in the meth culture," Hughes said. "What we've done is we've made the community aware of it. The community is saying, 'If we're going to be known for something in Kirksville, let's not let it be for methamphetamine. If you want

"If we're going to be known for something in Kirksville, let's not let it be for methamphetamine."

Jim Hughes
Kirksville Police Chief



Adair County Chief Deputy Larry Logston shows lithium batteries, an ingredient used in making meth, from his seized drug paraphernalia collection in his office at the Sheriff's Department.

to do this, you better go someplace else."

Despite the message from the community, some meth users still call Kirksville home.

Joyce Moots, 51, was taken into custody Oct. 4 for methamphetamine possession with the intent to distribute.

"It's very unusual," Chief Deputy Logston said. "It was actual crystal meth. It's more potent, better quality, more expensive, and it was all imported. The people around here don't have the means to make meth like that."

He said the street value of the approximately two ounces found is about \$3,800.

According to the police report, Moots, who was under the influence of methamphetamine when she called 911 Oct. 4, said her husband purchased the substance in Omaha, Neb.

It's a little more difficult to cook meth anywhere in Missouri after this summer.

In mid-July, a new Missouri law came into effect, mandating that all tablet-form pseudoephedrine (like Sudafed) products be sold behind the counter. Pseudoephedrine is a precursor ingredient for finished methamphetamine.

Jim Brittain, Hy-Vee pharmacy manager, said the law requires him and his staff to keep a log of how much pseudoephedrine each

customer purchases. An individual is only allowed nine grams per month.

"You don't have to have a prescription, but you have to sign for it," Brittain said.

He said that despite a small drop in their pseudoephedrine sales, he thinks the law is a positive.

"I think it's long overdue," Brittain said. "I applaud the Missouri legislature."

Through the years, Brittain has seen a number of encounters with suspected addicts, he said.

"They usually calm down eventually and leave," he said. "I don't see the problem today I saw two or three years ago."

Now that retailers are required to keep track of pseudoephedrine buyers, meth addicts will have to become more sophisticated to beat the system, Brittain said.

"What they're probably doing is hitting my pharmacy for just a couple of boxes, and then one pharmacy to the next, one town to the next," he said. "Of course, the downside to that is [the police] will be looking at and comparing all those records."

Those — whether through pharmacists or law enforcement officials — are determined to work together because methamphetamine is prevalent across Missouri, Randolph County Sheriff Mark Nichols said.

"In Moberly, we have a lot of

what we call dump sites," Nichols said. "They have a portable lab and leave it in a road ditch or a field."

He said the North Missouri Drug Task Force, which oversees Adair, Randolph and six other counties, is busy all the time. The 2006 federal budget eliminates many drug task forces, but Nichols and others have been working to fight the fund reduction.

"It might not be as bad as we originally thought," Nichols said.

After a meth addict has been arrested, he or she must go through treatment to be reinstated into society. One option is Kirksville's drug court, which was founded in March 2003.

Russell Steele, Adair County circuit judge, said a drug court requires more judicial involvement than the traditional court system.

"I see these people on a regular basis, review their progress, their problems," Steele said. "If they've done well, they get a pat on the back, sometimes a monetary incentive. If they've messed up, you give them a sanction."

Relapse and other noncompliance is not an unexpected part of recovery, Steele said.

Unfortunately, the recovery rate for drug addicts is only about 20 percent, said Barry Baker, a therapist at Preferred Family and a recovered meth user himself. (See related story.)

This low figure stems from additional problems.

"Meth addicts don't just have a drug problem," Steele said. "That drug problem has created a family problem. They don't have a driver's license. They don't have a job, they don't have any money. Some of them don't have a place to live. To treat the addiction and not the underlying problems is putting a Band-Aid on a broken arm."

He said the drug court program helps addicts find daycare, transportation, educational and job training and other necessities, as well as counseling for mental health needs and frequent and random drug testing.

Drug court graduates often get a suspended imposition of sentence, which means there is no permanent conviction on their record, Steele said.

Fourteen individuals have graduated from the 21-month drug court program so far, and most were meth addicts, Steele said. About 30 people are going through treatment.

Steele said the hardest part to understand is why people continue using after they've seen the devastating effects on their lives.

"Nobody chooses to be an addict," he said. "That was hard for me to accept. I said, 'Well, you can quit if you want to.' Well, no, you really can't."

ADDICT | Recovering user counsels other addicts who are attempting to stay clean from methamphetamine

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"I loved it," he said. "I started using intravenously, and I loved it. I loved the way it made me feel. It was a love affair that lasted 20 years. It was a dopamine rush. It made me feel 9 feet tall and bulletproof."

In the 1970s, methamphetamine was even more potent than today's mom-and-pop versions, Baker said. "That methamphetamine wasn't from around here," he said. "We didn't cook it. Motorcycle gangs would bring it through, and you'd have meth for a while, and then you wouldn't. That's just the way it was. ... I just went right to the dealer and bought the supply I needed, where there was a gram or an eightball or whatever."

Unlike many of his clients who end up at Preferred because of probation requirements, it wasn't prison that prompted Baker to conquer his habit for good.

"I was going to lose my family," he said. "I was go-

ing to lose my third family. ... My wife just told me, 'If you don't stop, we're going to leave you.' And she should have left me a long time before that. We were married nine years before I got clean and sober."

It is hard to believe soft-spoken Baker was once a violent person.

"[Meth] changed me 180 degrees," he said. "What you should understand is before I got clean and sober, I carried a gun. I beat people up for money. I was a type of person that you wouldn't want to be around."

Once an individual is hooked, using is no longer about sustaining a high, Baker said.

"The thing about addiction is it kicks in, and you become obsessive-compulsive about the drug," he said. "The addict uses to feel normal. The addict uses to feel like you and I do when we're sober."

Baker, a brakeman and railroad conductor at the time of his addiction, said meth probably enhanced

his work performance.

When he began treatment in 1989, he started volunteering at Preferred Family.

"It just progressed from there," Baker said.

In 1990, he enrolled at Graceland University in Lamoni, Iowa, and earned a four-year degree in the studies of addiction. Now, as a licensed therapist, a drug court counselor and a member of the state meth coalition, Baker said he is happy to be actively fighting the methamphetamine epidemic.

"I have to surrender to [recovery] on a daily basis," Baker said. "It becomes a daily part of your life. You never grow out of it, or you never recover. This is an ongoing thing until you die, hopefully of old age."

After all he has been through, Baker's own failing heart health doesn't faze him.

"I need a new heart," he said with his trademark grin. "I'm asking for volunteers. Especially good, young hearts. That's what I need."

COSTA | Psychology professor is recovering in hospital in St. Louis after suffering a fall

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"It's wonderful," Ramsey said. "Although it's only been a week, I've missed him."

Ramsey said she works in Costa's Brewer Annex office and has taken four of Costa's classes in the past.

"We're getting things squared away," Ramsey said. "I know my way around his office. I'm helping people figure out which people

have taken which tests, where we can find certain things."

Costa's classes resumed Wednesday, with psychology professors stepping in for Costa.

Division secretary Melissa Wilsford said many students have asked her about the status of their classes.

"They're wondering if they're having class, tests, what's wrong

with Sal, if there's a way to get in touch with him," Wilsford said.

Costa advises the Sigma Tau Gamma fraternity and Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority. Tri-Sigma president senior Mikaeya Truesdell said she and other Tri-Sigma members have received updates from members of the Panhellenic Council.

"Sal's pretty much involved in

every activity," Truesdell said. "Everyone in the Greek community is worried about him."

Costa said he plans to return to the classroom Monday. He said the University should reconsider using dunk tanks for future fundraisers, as two other administrators became ill after being dunked.

"That's a heck of a risk management issue," Costa said.

MAGRUDER | Newly renovated building still has 1,500 items to fix before opening

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"Substantially complete means that all of the construction would be complete to the point where we can move in," Ellis said. "And any additional work that had to be done wouldn't be disruptive to us."

Rodney Asberry, superintendent for Paric Corporation, said the company plans to complete the to-do list by Friday. He later said he thinks even after the list is completed, there will be more work to come.

"I think that they'll come up with more touch-up stuff," Asberry said.

Ellis said the building originally was scheduled to be finished in June, but there is not a specific reason the construction is months behind schedule.

"The normal construction process is taking longer than anticipated," Ellis said. "There is not really one thing you can point your finger at that caused the delay. I could not for sure say that our original schedule was unrealistic, but it seems to have been."

Ellis said the construction on Magruder Hall was scheduled to take place in three phases. Phase one, which was scheduled to take two years, involved new construction on the south and east sides of the existing building. That was all done at the end of summer 2003.

Phase two, which started in early summer 2004 and took a little less than one year, included complete renovation of the south half of the building.

Phase three was supposed to take another year, and it involved knocking down the north half of the old building and building three floors of new construction. In the end, Magruder will be a rectangular building with three floors all around.

Ellis said the delays in construction caused many scheduling problems for the science division because 11 of the 13 classrooms it was supposed to use this semester were not completed on time.

"It was clear back in July that it would take a while to finish everything," Ellis said. "Back in July we made the decision that we wouldn't be able to move in for the fall semester. It turns out that phase three has all but two of our new classrooms. We had our fall

schedule put together as if we would be using all 13 classrooms. So in July, we scrambled and moved all of our classes to vacant rooms around campus."

Ellis said the construction delays could affect second semester class scheduling as well because even after the building is deemed substantially completed, six to eight weeks of work still need to be done. Ellis said during that six-to-eight week period, the building will be furnished and outfitted with all the necessary technology.

Despite being months behind schedule, Dave Rector, executive director of institutional research and budgets, said the project still is within the original budget of \$32 million and looks to stay that way.

CRASH | Recent accident injures three

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charged was the passenger from Peterson's car.

However, Farnsworth said all injuries from the accident were minor.

Robinson explained soreness is inevitable with a car accident, and he opted out of going to the hospital.

"You're always a little sore when you get rear-ended," he said. "I'm not going to pay a bunch of money to go to the hospital. It's just a little soreness. That's a common-sense decision."

Alvarez-Landa said her car suffered damage to the rear bumper and the area around her license plate in the front, but it still was functional after the accident.

"The damage to [Peterson's car] was much more severe," Alvarez-Landa said. "It had to be towed."

Robinson said his vehicle also did not have any major damages. He said that there is damage to the rear bumper because it is dented.

Alvarez-Landa said that the insurance companies still are investigating the crash.

"I had a lot of pain in my neck and my shoulder."

Nohemi Alvarez-Landa
Junior

Meth Facts

- About half of the meth in the Midwest comes from Mexico and the Pacific
- Also called crystal, crank, amp, speed, chalk, zip and ice
- Cost: at least \$1,700 per ounce (about 110 hits)
- Cooking one pound of meth leaves five to six pounds of toxic waste
- The average "cook" teaches 10 others annually
- Cleaning a meth lab can cost up to \$150,000
- Ingredients include pseudoephedrine, lithium batteries and drain cleaner

sources: Newsweek, Koch Crime Institute, Adair County Meth Coalition, Drug Enforcement Adminis-