



# THE INFORMANT



## Meth Watch Member e-Letter

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**Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council's (GSSAC) Prevention Center  
Spokane County Meth Action Team (MAT)**



## 'STRAWBERRY METH' HITS THE MARKET IN SKAGIT COUNTY



MOUNT VERNON, Wash. - A Skagit County man is headed to prison for selling what's called "strawberry meth." Look up strawberry meth online and you'll find many Web sites calling it urban legend - a pink methamphetamine cut with products like strawberry drink mix. But authorities say it's very real, and very dangerous.

Undercover detectives in Skagit County purchased a bag. The methamphetamine inside looked like candy. It was manufactured with "strawberry mix" to give it an attractive color and reduce its harsh taste.

"Until we actually bought the first ounce, we did not expect it to be bright strawberry pink," Deputy Prosecutor Trisha Johnson said.

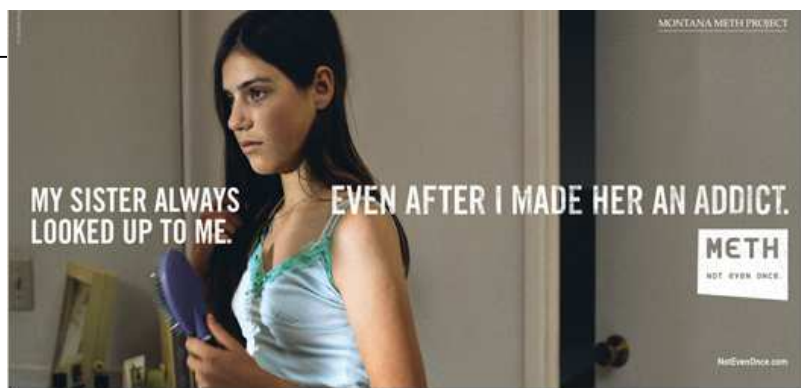
When police arrested the dealer, he told them: "It's the new thing."

"It's that designer look, it's the cool thing. That's the way they market it," said Chief Will Reichardt, of the Skagit County Sheriff's Department. "And I think a kid looks at that and it doesn't look as dangerous as maybe he's heard before."

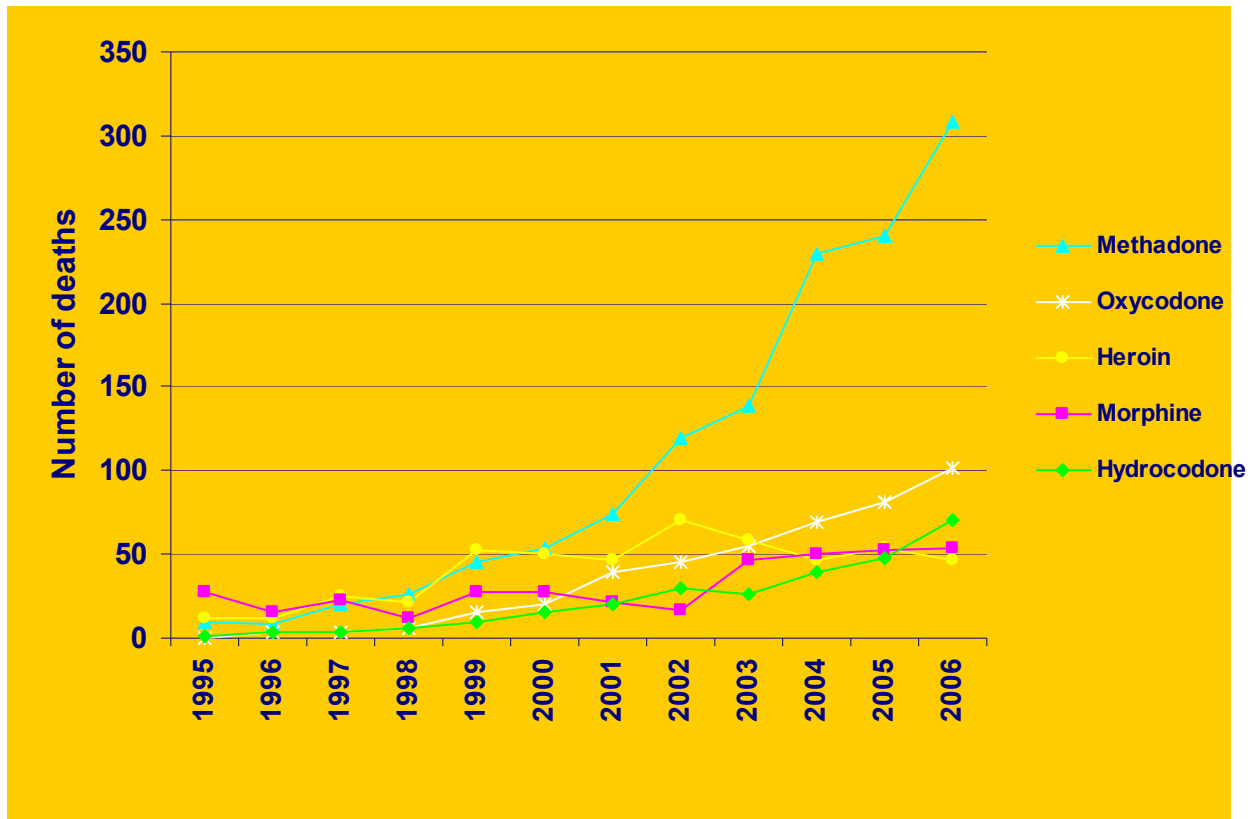
But it is. Pink or white -- meth kills and ruins lives. Just ask Nancy Vanausdle.

When her daughter got hooked, Nancy's grandson Christopher was just a baby.

"We'd go to bed at night and he'd cry because his mom wasn't there, and that was hard for him," she said. The drug dealer in this case was found guilty last week. He faces several years in prison. ([www.ncvn.com](http://www.ncvn.com))



## Trends for Specific Opiates Deaths Washington 1995-2006



As the above graph shows, unintentional prescription drug poisoning deaths have been on the rise for the past few years. According to the Spokane County Medical Examiner's Office:

- The total number of deaths attributed to overdose in 2007 is 123  
(more than 90% of these deaths were due to prescription drugs).
- Of these 123 deaths 99 were accidental, 19 were suicide and 5 were undetermined.
- Six deaths were attributed to methadone intoxication only  
(the methadone was prescribed to the decedent in 3 of the 6 deaths).
- Methadone was a contributing factor in 49 deaths, of these 49 deaths, there were 35 cases in which the methadone was not prescribed to the decedent and it is unknown how the decedent obtained the methadone.
- Of all 123 deaths there were 71 in which the drugs were prescribed to the decedent . In the other 52 deaths, it is unknown how the decedent obtained the prescription. ([www.spokanecounty.org](http://www.spokanecounty.org))

### PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE IS A GROWING PROBLEM IN OUR STATE:

- **56% of people using prescription pain relievers for non medical use got them from a friend or family member**
- **In 2006 there were 323,000 users of "non medical" pain medications in Washington State.**
- **In 2006 more people in Washington died from unintentional drug poisonings than died in motor vehicle crashes. 796 died from drug poisonings compared to 687 from motor vehicle crashes.**
- **In 2005 Washington led the nation in the number of pharmacy burglaries and armed robberies with 63 burglaries and 49 armed robberies.**

*(Department of Community Trade and Economic Development)*

# Upcoming Events

Washington State



Watch

**DATE:** May 28, 2009  
**TIME:** 9am—2:30pm  
**LOCATION:** Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute  
Commons Building  
4000 W. Randolph Rd., Spokane

This no cost training will include the roll out of the **Washington State Rx Watch** Community Presentation, trends and information regarding the increase of prescription drug abuse in our area. Lunch will be provided.

For more information, please contact:

Lacey Jones,  
Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council's (GSSAC) Prevention Center  
(509) 922-8383

## Pharmacy Safety & Security AND Rx Patrol

Overview of several types of pharmacy crimes and procedures to consider in deterring diversion. Participants will learn techniques to address and deter diversion, robberies & burglaries.

**DATE:** April 23, 2009  
**TIME:** 6:30pm-8:30pm  
**LOCATION:** Spokane County Sheriff's  
Office Training Center  
10319 E. Appleway, Spokane

## Prescription Drug Training

**DATES:** March 17th—March 18th  
**TIME:** Each day: 7:30am-8:30am Breakfast & Check-in  
Ends 4pm daily  
**LOCATION:** Camas Center for Community Wellness  
Usk, WA



This is a **FREE** training. **HIGHLIGHTS:** Instructor, Ronald Mullins, Department of Homeland Security, Drug Enforcement Administration, Drug Endangered Children & Teen Challenge.