



Kalamazoo County

Health & Community Services

Environmental Health

Property Owner Guidelines for Decontamination of Methamphetamine Contaminated Dwellings

Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services (KCHCS) discourages property owners from performing methamphetamine cleanup due to the explosive nature of the waste chemicals resulting from methamphetamine production or use and possible reactivity of waste chemical residues with water. We encourage the use of private contractors to perform decontamination.

NOTE: Painting over surfaces without sufficient cleaning has shown to be inadequate for hazard elimination.

If a dwelling is condemned due to methamphetamine use or production, decontamination and sampling must be performed. Residual contamination on surfaces must be below acceptable levels before condemnation can be lifted. Decontamination is a tedious, complicated and potentially dangerous process. To assure that cleanup is thorough and safe, an experienced contractor should be hired for cleaning. If you attempt to clean the dwelling on your own, the following provides guidance but offers no assurances for methamphetamine residue removal or safety.

1. To focus cleaning efforts, it is recommended that you contact the law enforcement agency to obtain a copy of the police report. The report may indicate where the methamphetamine components were found.
2. You must research proper cleaning techniques and have a complete understanding of the nature of the many chemicals resulting from methamphetamine production or use. Chemicals will vary based on the type of cook method. Some chemical residues may be highly explosive and flammable and can result in sickness or death if not properly handled. ***If a Red Phosphorus cook method was used, the chemical by-products are highly reactive with water and may result in toxic vapors.***
3. You must request permission to be on the property for cleaning from KCHCS Environmental Health Department. You will be provided with a memo to keep with you when onsite to show to local officials and law enforcement if requested. If at any time children are found onsite during cleanup activities, Children's Protective Services will be contacted.
4. All onsite persons need to wear personal protective equipment including but not limited to: full Tyvek suits and/or long sleeve shirts and pants, face mask and thick tear-proof rubber gloves.
5. All personal property on the premise should be removed and cleaned.
6. Every square inch of every surface (walls, ceilings, cabinets and floors) needs to be addressed. These steps should be repeated two or three times depending on the extent and duration of methamphetamine production and use:
 - a. Using separate rags for each surface (floors, walls, ceilings, doors, fixtures, and windows), wash with a strong cleaning detergent such as tri-sodium phosphate. A final rinsing with clean water is recommended. ***Please note: bleach and disinfectant-type cleaners may cause contamination to smear across surfaces.***
 - b. Remove and dispose of all carpets. Shampooing carpeting by a property owner is not recommended.
 - c. Using a strong cleaning detergent and separate rags for each area wash all appliances inside and out.
 - d. Using a strong cleaning detergent and separate rags for each area wash all cabinets inside and out.
 - e. The HVAC (heating and air conditioning) system must be cleaned by a professional company.