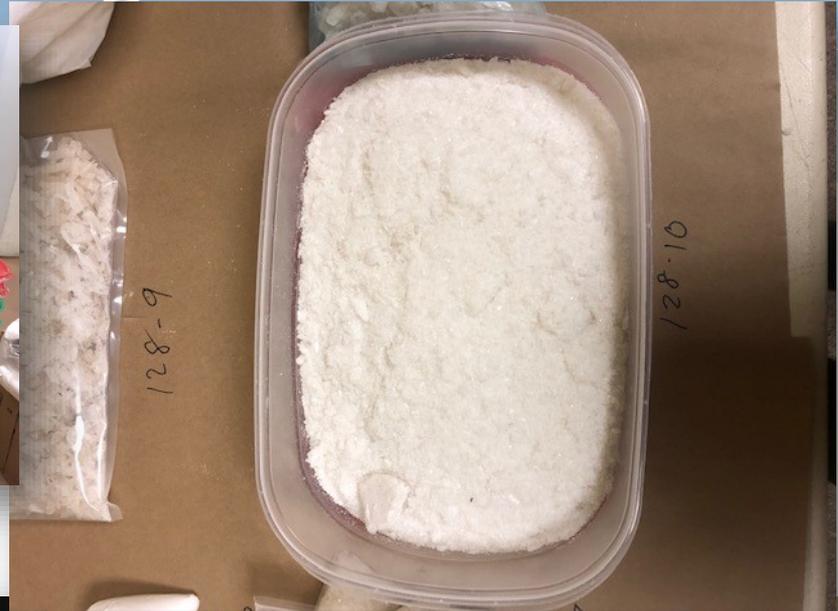


Methamphetamine: California's Persistent Drug Threat



From the Clan Lab Capital to the Largest Importer

- Formerly, California and particularly the Central Valley dominated meth production.
- Clandestine precursor-based labs – the largest designated as “super labs” were abundant.
- Dismantling these toxic labs was dangerous work, requiring careful decontamination.
- Now, meth is produced in Mexico and smuggled into the U.S.



Source: Central Valley HIDTA



Meth Conversion Labs

- Central Valley HIDTA investigators routinely encounter meth conversion labs, where liquid meth smuggled from Mexico is converted to crystal meth (ice).
- A HIDTA team raided this lab in process: 260 pounds of ice were already finished, and the remaining 250 gallons of liquid could yield as much as 1,100 more pounds of finished meth.

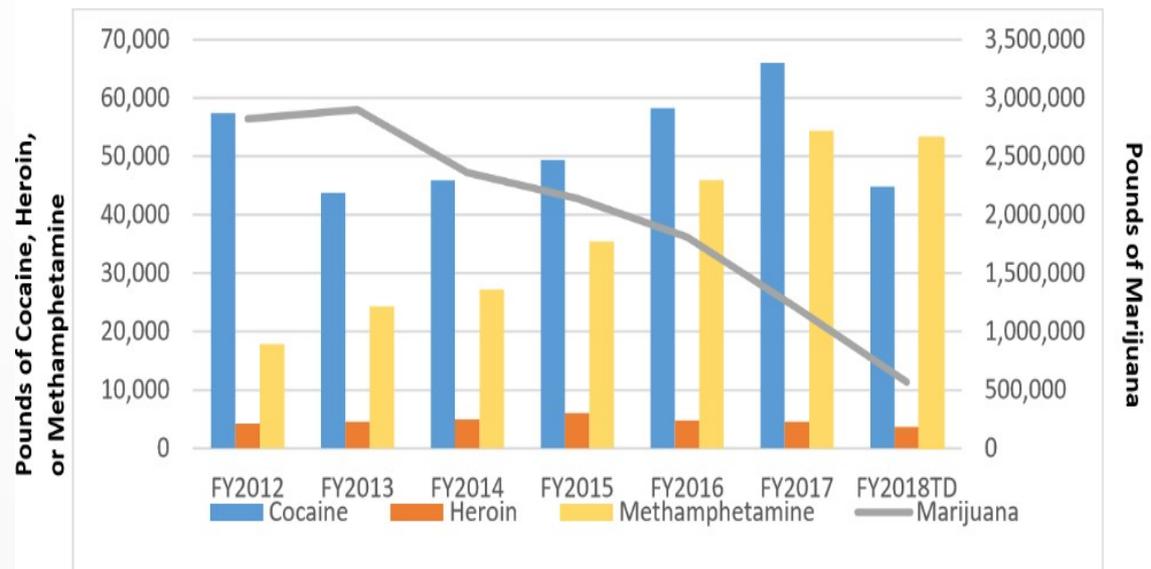


Source: Central Valley HIDTA

Meth – Where does it come from, and how does it get here?

- Methamphetamine is produced in cartel-controlled clandestine labs in Mexico, then smuggled into the U.S., mostly through ports of entry along the SWB.

Pounds of Drugs Seized by Customs and Border Protection, FY2012–FY2018TD (as of 8/31/2018)

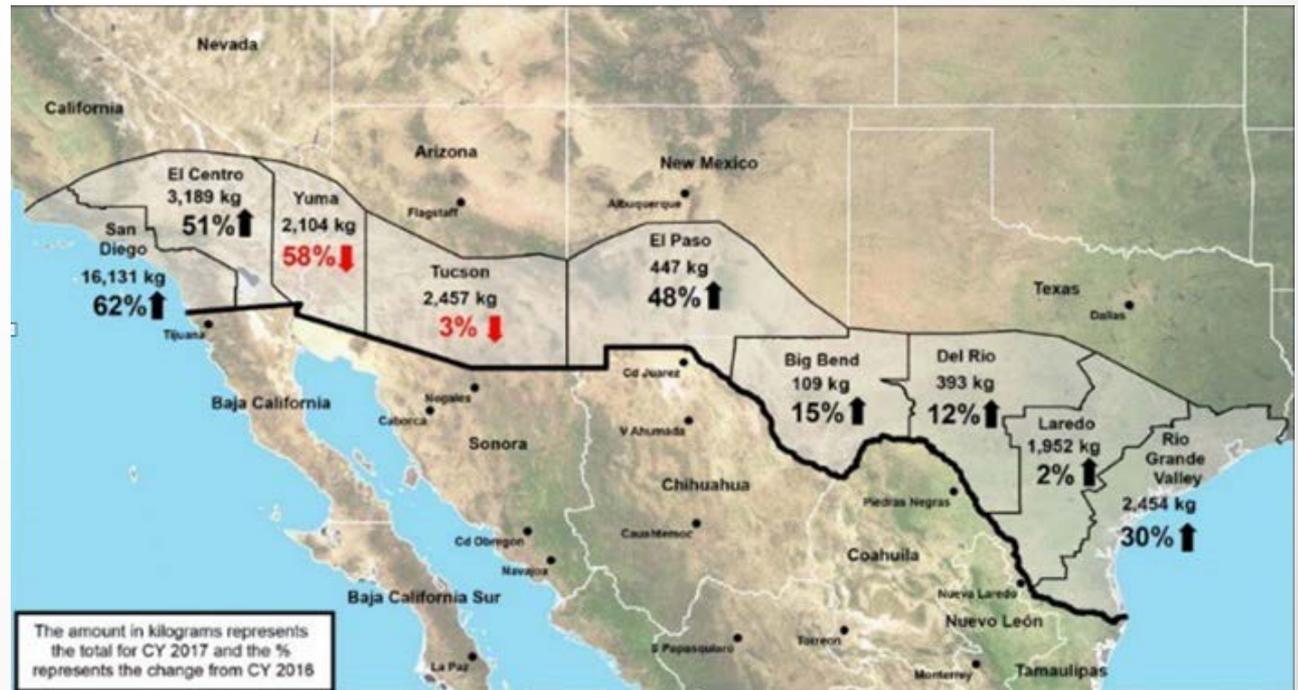


Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection
<https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/cbp-enforcement-statistics-fy2018>



The Role of the Southwest Border

- 97 % of meth seizures occur at, or near, the SWB in 2017.
- More than half (54%) of those seizures occurred within the San Diego Corridor.
- This demonstrates the heightened threat of meth to California.



Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection



The Challenge of Liquid Meth

- In order to avoid detection at ports of entry, Mexican meth traffickers smuggle liquid meth mixed in gasoline or disguised as household products.
- Once in the U.S., heat sources and/or chemicals are used to recover the crystal meth.

Figures 87. Supplement Bottles in Commercial Packaging Containing Methamphetamine in Solution, May 2017.



Source: DEA

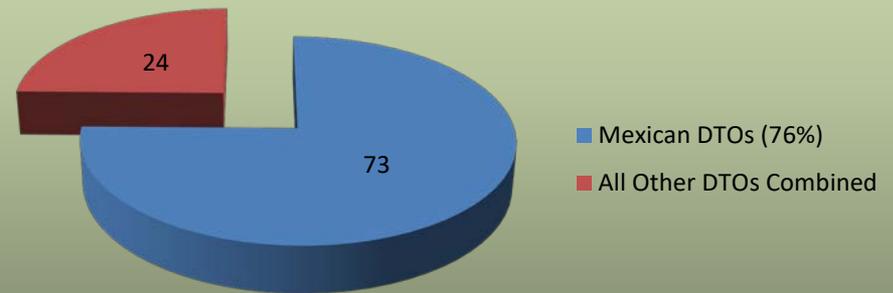


Source: DEA 2018 National Drug Threat Assessment

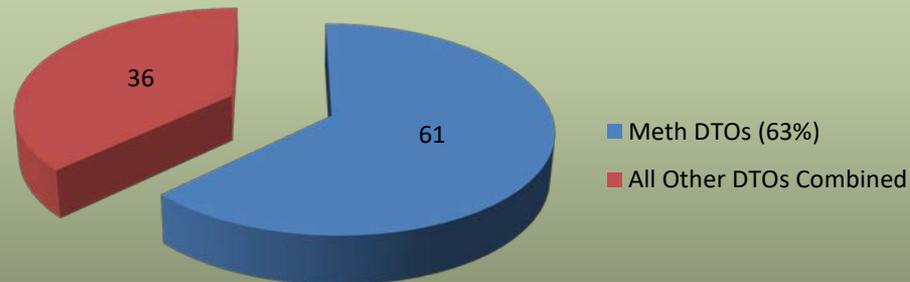
Who Controls Meth Trafficking?

- Domestic wholesale distribution of meth is controlled by Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTOs). Mexican and U.S.-based criminal groups are responsible for retail meth distribution in the U.S.
- Regional investigative activity follows this pattern.

DTOs under investigation in CVC HIDTA during 2018



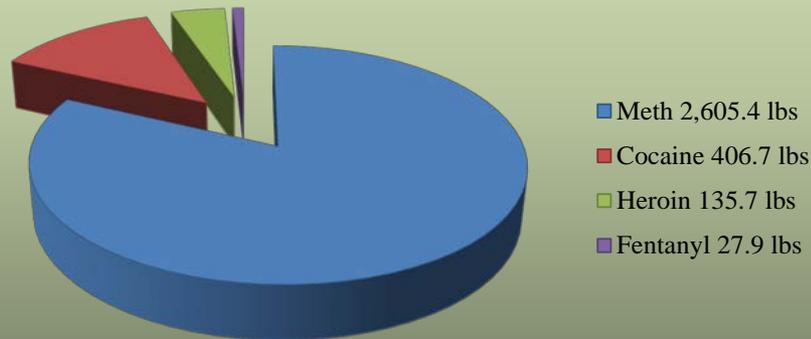
DTOs Primarily Distributing Meth in CVC HIDTA during 2018



How Much Meth is seized regionally?

- Central Valley HIDTA task forces seize more meth by volume than any other drug (excluding marijuana).
- Meth seizures have increased over the last three years. When considered with the morbidity, mortality, and treatment data, this is an ominous trend.

CVC HIDTA 2018 Drug Seizure Distribution (non-marijuana)



CVC HIDTA Methamphetamine Seizures 2016-2018



Source: Central Valley California HIDTA

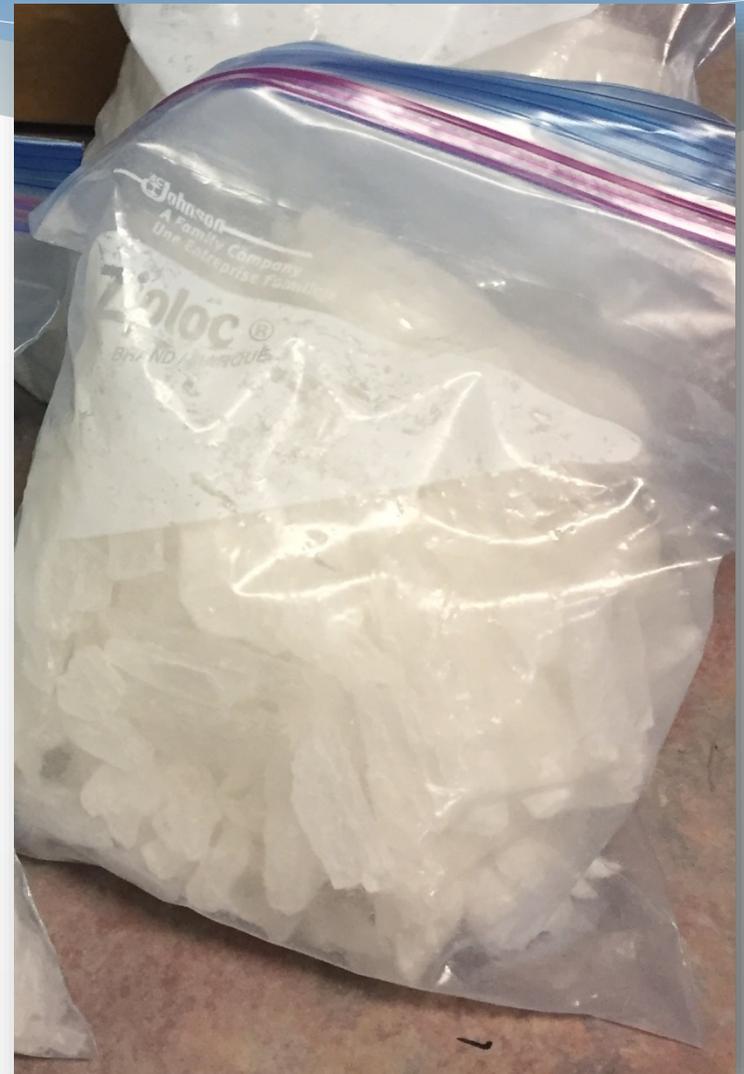


How Much Does Meth Cost?

- Meth is widely available and dirt cheap.
- Ten years ago, a pound of crystal meth (ice) cost as much as \$15,000.
- Today, undercover negotiations for ice as low as \$1,400 per pound are common in the region.

CVC HIDTA Methamphetamine (ice)
Prices 2018-2019

Prices in \$	
Gram	10-50
Ounce	150-300
Pound	1,400-2,000
Kilogram	4,000-6,000

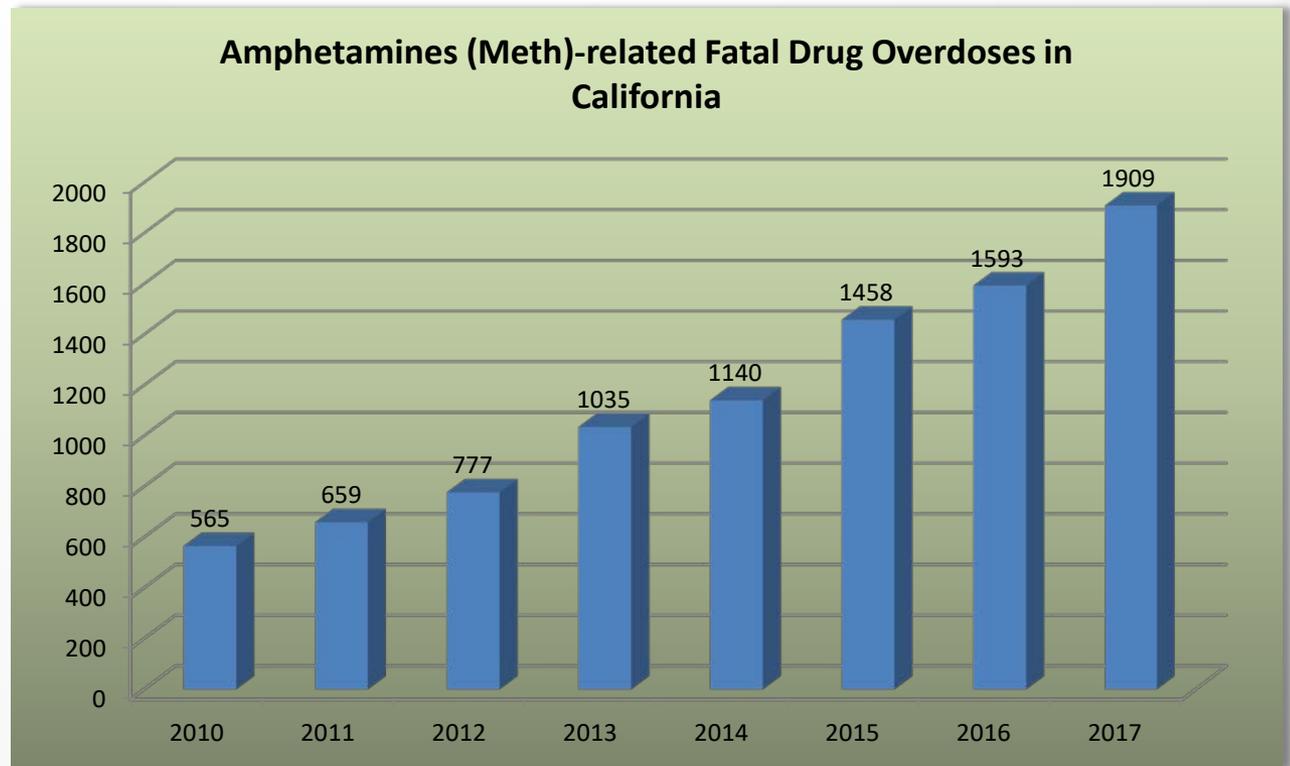


Source: Central Valley California HIDTA



Sobering Numbers

- Meth-related fatal drug poisonings have been steadily increasing in California – a 237% rise in eight years.
- The 2017 total for meth-related overdoses rivals opioid-related deaths: 2,194.



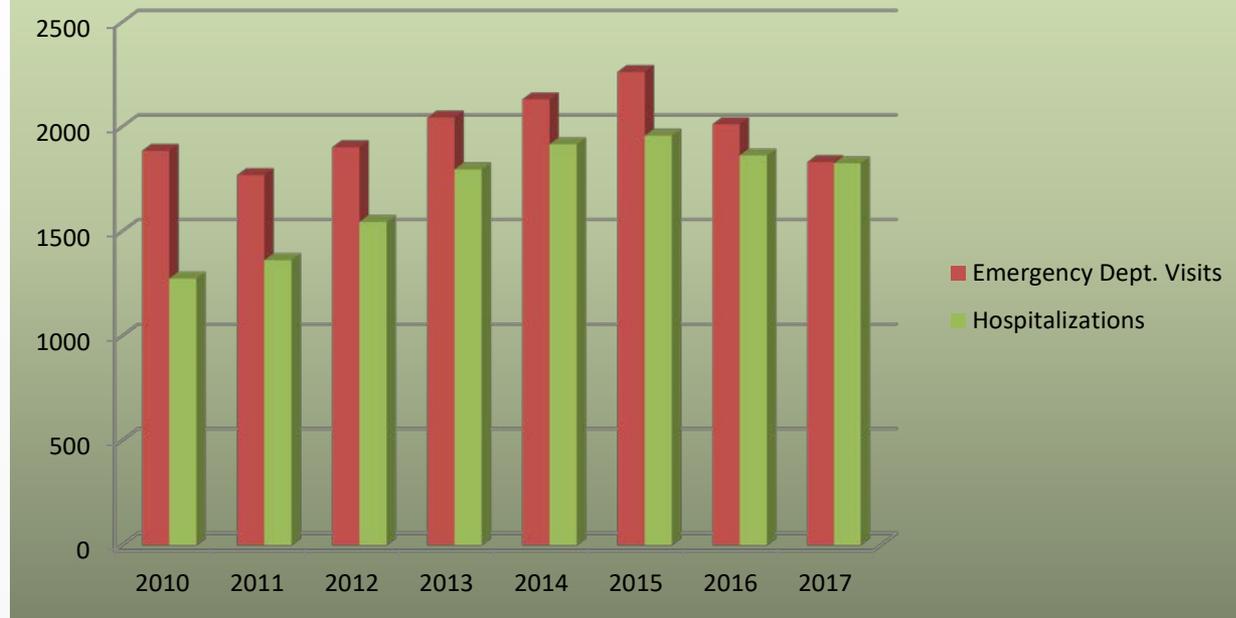
Source: California Department of Public Health, Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development; latest full-year data available.



More Sobering Numbers

- Related negative health consequences are equally troubling: numbers of meth-related E.D. visits and hospital admissions are consistently high year-to-year.

Amphetamines (Meth)-related Emergency Department Visits and Hospital Admissions in California



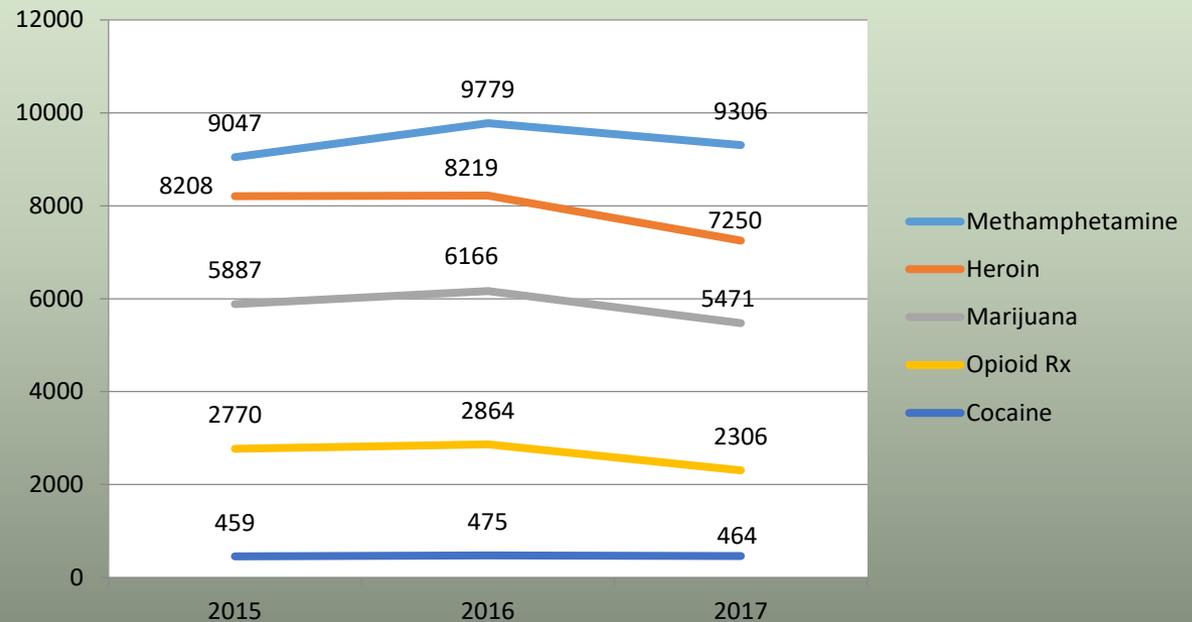
Source: California Department of Public Health, Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development; latest full-year data available.



More Sobering Numbers

- In the 12 counties comprising the Central Valley HIDTA, meth is the drug most often identified by patients admitted to drug abuse treatment programs.

2015-2017 CVC HIDTA Counties Drug Abuse Treatment Admissions



Source: California Department of Health Care Services, Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services, Office of Applied Research Analysis; latest full-year data available.



The Regional Challenge of Drug Trafficking and Abuse

- Meth is not the only drug threat in California.
- HIDTA teams regularly seize opioids like heroin and fentanyl: the opioid epidemic is happening in our state.
- Public health data indicates more people are using and being harmed by cocaine.
- THC extraction labs continue to explode causing death and destruction and produce dangerously potent marijuana concentrates.



Top to bottom: 2-pound brick of fentanyl, 217 lbs. of cocaine, sophisticated THC extraction lab, all seized by Central Valley HIDTA teams 2018-2019.



Thank You For Your Attention

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