

# Northwest HIDTA



Serving the needs of fourteen Northwest Counties:  
Benton, Clark, Cowlitz, Franklin, King, Kitsap, Lewis,  
Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, Whatcom,  
and Yakima.



## Enforcement Highlights



“Uncovering a multitude of indoor marijuana grows in the greater Seattle area.”

### Marijuana Eradication Program

Since July 2005, the DEA led Northwest HIDTA Intergraded Task Force, along with local law enforcement (King County Sheriffs Office and the Valley Narcotics Enforcement Team), has been uncovering a multitude of indoor marijuana grows in the greater Seattle area. There appears to be a growing trend of producing indoor marijuana in the region as producers seek to evade interception at the U.S.-Canada border. Marijuana grown in British Columbia, known as B.C. Bud, is in high demand in the United States and the profit to be gained from production is significant. The minimum street value of indoor marijuana is \$3,000 per pound. A 500 plant operation can yield \$750,000 and with the capability of three harvests per year; one year’s profits can equal \$2.1 mil-



lion. This kind of profit and demand coupled with increased border security and transportation costs have led indoor marijuana growers in Canada to migrate over the border and set up their organizations in the United States, still using the same production techniques and marketing their product as B.C. Bud.

*(Continued on page 2)*

#### Contents

Enforcement Highlights.....	Page 1
Director’s Message.....	Page 2
Watch Center .....	Page 3
Training Schedule .....	Page 4
ISC Contact List.....	Page 4
Pacific Northwest Highway Interdiction Program.....	Page 5
Prevention/Treatment.....	Page 6



## Director's Message

On September 21 and 22, the Pacific Rim Meth Summit was convened at the Microsoft Conference Center. It was one of the best attended and informative summits yet. Besides having neighbors from surrounding states attend there were also participants from Canada, Hawaii, and Mexico. The planning committee led by Scott Sotobeer, King County Sheriff's Office, did an outstanding job in organizing the event and planning the agenda.

On November 27 through the 30, the Western States Information Network (WSIN) held their annual conference in Vancouver, Washington. This was one of the few times that this conference has been held outside of the state of California. I was glad to see that Washington State was well represented. It should be noted that Harry Hansen, Northwest HIDTA analyst, received a special recognition award for his work on the Street Gang Tracking Group and the substantial increase of gang affiliated subjects into the RISSGang database. Congratulations to all the award recipients including the Snohomish Regional Drug Task Force, West Sound Narcotics Enforcement Team, and the Chelan County Sheriff's Office.

During the first week of November, the ONDCP On-Site Review Team from Washington DC reviewed all aspects of the Northwest HIDTA program. Interviews were conducted with Task Force Commanders and most of the Executive Board. Paper or on site audits were done of all of our Fiduciaries and of our equipment property Inventory. In depth interviews were conducted of our Intelligence Support Center Manager and our Prevention and Treatment Manager. Our performance measurements were scrutinized and validated. The review was very thorough and complimentary of the Northwest HIDTA and its staff. I wish to thank the members of the Executive Board and the members of the participating agencies for committing the time and resources to make this a successful experience.

It is with regret that I inform you that our longtime supervisor of the Analytical Unit, Bill Wittenberger, has retired and that our lead analyst in the Analytical Unit, Jessie Phillips, has accepted employment with Seattle PD. We will miss them both, and we wish them well. I also wish to bid farewell to Sheriff Gary Edwards, Thurston County, who after 36 years of law enforcement has retired. He was the most senior member of the Executive Board and was with us since the beginning of Northwest HIDTA.

*(Continued from page 1)*

Reports from the RCMP indicate that these groups are often Chinese or Vietnamese-based organizations who have developed a specialized, systematic procedure for producing indoor marijuana. These



groups have individuals designated for specific duties within the organization. There is usually one real estate agent who acquires houses with desirable characteristics, such as a fireplace and an attached garage for concealing transport vehicles, typically in middle-class, suburban neighborhoods. A designated electrician in the group sets up the wiring, bypassing the electrical meter to avoid detection. A team installs the necessary heating and ventilation systems.

When all the equipment and the marijuana plants are in place, a grow tender is brought to live in the house and take care of the plants. This person is usually a newly-arrived immigrant who has few or no connections in the community. Once the crop is full-grown, others come in to harvest the plants, and the marijuana is taken away to be processed and distributed. Because of the specialized jobs of members of the organization, the members often have contact with only a few individuals in the organization and are unfamiliar with the workings of the organization. This is especially true for the grow tenders who only see the harvesters and are not told anything about the organization. And these are the individuals law enforcement is most likely to have contact with, making it difficult to form a complete picture of the organization and its members.

These types of characteristics surrounding indoor marijuana grows seen by the RCMP in Canada have been seen in grows seized in the Seattle area. It is suspected that the same kind of large-scale, sophisticated operations seen in Canada are at work here.

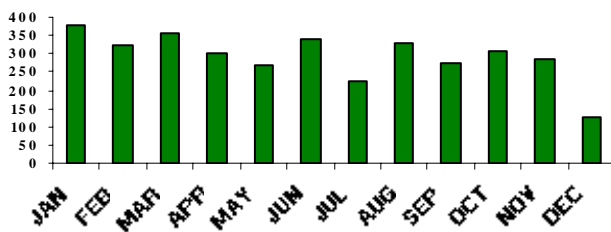
It is also believed that many of the indoor marijuana grows

*(Continued on page 5)*

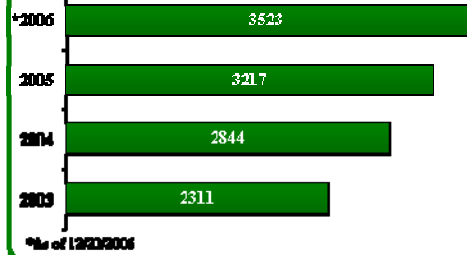
# Watch Center

2006 CRITICAL EVENTS (CEVs)

as of 12/20/2006

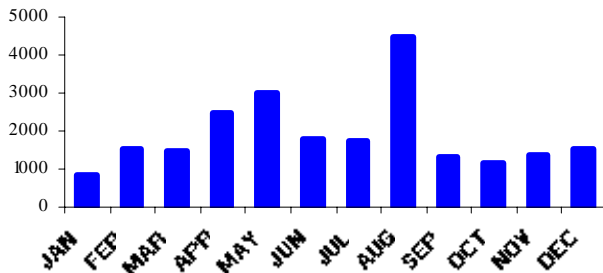


YEARLY STATS - CEVS

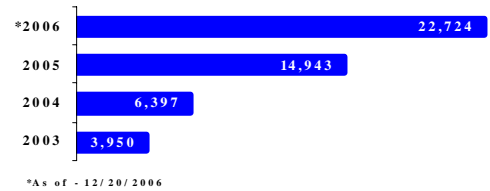


2006 INQUIRIES

as of 12/20/2006

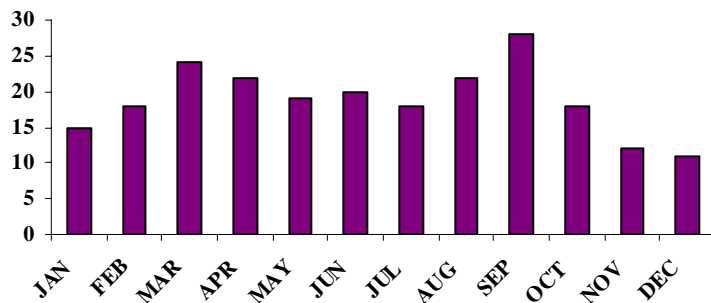


YEARLY STATS - INQUIRIES

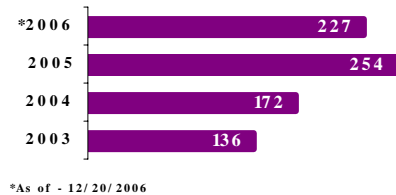


2006 METHAMPHETAMINE HOTLINE CALLS

as of 12/20/2006



YEARLY STATS  
METHAMPHETAMINE HOTLINE CALLS



# Update

## 2007 Scheduled Training Classes-1st Quarter

<u>Date</u>	<u>Provider</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Location/Provider</u>
01/08-01/12/07	MCTC	Undercover Techniques and Survival	CJTC/HIDTA
01/16-01/18/07	Helfers	Asset Forfeiture/Parallel Investigation	Marysville
01/29-02/02/07	MCTC	Interview & Interrogation	Richland/Richland PD
01/29-01/31/07	IIR	Narcotics Commanders Training	Mount Vernon PD/IIR
02/05-02/07/07	MCTC	Basic Spanish	Federal Way/Federal Protection Services
02/12-02/16/07	MCTC	Interview & Interrogation	Spokane/Spokane SO
02/27-02/28/07	FLETC	Money Laundering and Asset Forfeiture	Federal Way/Federal Protection Services
03/26-03/30/07	MCTC	Highway Drug Investigations for Patrol	TBD/HIDTA
03/27-03/28/07	MCTC	Identity Theft Awareness and Investigation	Spokane/Spokane SO
03/26-03/28/07	MCTC	Basic Spanish for LEA	Richland/Richland PD
04/16-04/19/07	MCTC	Basic Spanish for LEA—Phase II	Federal Way/Federal Protection Services

- There is no charge for training with Northwest HIDTA.
- For all MCTC provider training, registration is online at [www.counterdrugtraining.com](http://www.counterdrugtraining.com).
- MCTC training will pay for lodging and meals outside a 50 mile radius (see web site for details).
- All transportation costs are the responsibility of the individual agencies.
- If you have any questions, please contact Northwest HIDTA Training Coordinator Robert Wicklund at (206) 352-3647 or Sherrie Funston at (206) 352-3648.

## ISC Contact List

NAME	TELEPHONE #	EMAIL ADDRESS
Baunsgard, Dustin, RA3	(509) 353-2964	<a href="mailto:dbaunsgard@nw.hidta.org">dbaunsgard@nw.hidta.org</a>
Biggs, Charlotte, Fiscal Officer	(206) 352-3604	<a href="mailto:cbiggs@nw.hidta.org">cbiggs@nw.hidta.org</a>
Brown, Julia, RA3	(206) 352-3640	<a href="mailto:jbrown@nw.hidta.org">jbrown@nw.hidta.org</a>
Cayford, Michelle, RA4	(206) 352-3626	<a href="mailto:mcayford@nw.hidta.org">mcayford@nw.hidta.org</a>
Downie, Christopher, ISC Manager	(206) 352-3669	<a href="mailto:cdownie@nw.hidta.org">cdownie@nw.hidta.org</a>
Fiber, Gary, Electronic Tech	(206) 352-3637	<a href="mailto:gfiber@nw.hidta.org">gfiber@nw.hidta.org</a>
Freng, Steve, P/T Manager	(206) 352-3603	<a href="mailto:sfreng@nw.hidta.org">sfreng@nw.hidta.org</a>
Fullmer-Anderson, Steena, RA3	(206) 352-3630	<a href="mailto:sfullmer@nw.hidta.org">sfullmer@nw.hidta.org</a>
Funston, Sherrie, Office Manager	(206) 352-3648	<a href="mailto:sfunston@nw.hidta.org">sfunston@nw.hidta.org</a>
Gosch, Patti, RA3	(206) 352-3633	<a href="mailto:pgosch@nw.hidta.org">pgosch@nw.hidta.org</a>
Hansen, Harry, RA3	(206) 352-3643	<a href="mailto:hhansen@nw.hidta.org">hhansen@nw.hidta.org</a>
Kimball, Cari, Systems Administrator	(206) 352-3646	<a href="mailto:ckimball@nw.hidta.org">ckimball@nw.hidta.org</a>
Longsworth, Steve, Network Manager	(206) 352-3631	<a href="mailto:slongsworth@nw.hidta.org">slongsworth@nw.hidta.org</a>
Ray, Jo, RA4	(206) 352-3640	<a href="mailto:jray@nw.hidta.org">jray@nw.hidta.org</a>
Rodriguez, Dave, Director	(206) 352-3601	<a href="mailto:drodriguez@nw.hidta.org">drodriguez@nw.hidta.org</a>
Snyder, Will, RA3	(206) 352-3628	<a href="mailto:wsnyder@nw.hidta.org">wsnyder@nw.hidta.org</a>
Stewart, Luci, RA3	(206) 352-3625-(360) 704-2407	<a href="mailto:lstewart@nw.hidta.org">lstewart@nw.hidta.org</a>
Thorpe, Jon, Watch Center Manager	(206) 352-3642	<a href="mailto:jthorpe@nw.hidta.org">jthorpe@nw.hidta.org</a>
Wicklund, Robert, Program Coordinator	(206) 352-3647	<a href="mailto:bwicklund@nw.hidta.org">bwicklund@nw.hidta.org</a>
Pham, Michelle, RA3	(206) 352-3667	<a href="mailto:mpham@nw.hidta.org">mpham@nw.hidta.org</a>

(Continued from page 2)

uncovered in the Seattle area have connections to Canada and are even being run by Canadians who have moved their operations across the border. With grow operations in the U.S., it is much easier for these organizations to distribute across the United States. The distribution networks and connections of these organizations are believed to include multiple states, spanning the width and breadth of our nation, with a particularly strong tie to the Northeast. There have also been indoor marijuana grows discovered in other states along the east and west coasts with similar characteristics, suggesting that the trend of indoor marijuana grows is not isolated to Washington State. The trend of indoor marijuana grows in the Pacific Northwest is certainly a cause for concern. This is another type of highly organized drug trafficking organization that brings with it the propensity for increased violence, including home invasions, assaults, and homicides, as well as a heightened fire risk from faulty wiring, potential chemical hazards, and a negative economic impact as the real estate value of these homes and their neighborhoods is affected by the toxic waste and chemicals involved and the association of drug dealing in the area. These are not an isolated incidence but a growing problem in the Pacific Northwest that law enforcement agencies in the region have recognized and will continue to

## Pacific Northwest Highway Interdiction Program



**92 pound marijuana seizure**

The Northwest HIDTA Investigative Support Center is in its second year supporting the Highway Interdiction Program. For 2006, Northwest HIDTA has received 200 seizure reports, an increase of 68 percent over 2005. Of these

seizures, 163 were reported from agencies within Washington State, which contained information about seizures that



occurred in state. The Washington State Patrol reported 117 seizures, an increase of 64 percent over 2005.

Thirty-seven of the seizures were received from agencies outside of Washington State that occurred in other parts of the country, but were determined to have a nexus to Washington State.

From the seizures processed, 231 subjects and 2,581 identifiers have been entered into the Western States Information Network (WSIN) database. Of these 231 subjects, 158 (68%) had a prior criminal history and 104 (45%) had prior arrests for drug activity. Forty-one Regional Information Sharing System (RISS) hits and 46 other hits were received and 8,036 database inquiries were conducted while completing these post-seizure analysis.

Northwest HIDTA seizure data indicates that the most commonly reported highway corridors on which drug seizures with connections to Washington State occurred include: I-5, I-90, I-80, and I-82. Seizures have also been found to be more common mid-week, Tuesday through Friday, and most often occur either mid-day or late evening. According to seizure data for the Western sector of Washington

State, the most common illicit substance seized at the U.S.-Canada border is marijuana and the overwhelming majority of these seizures entail shipments headed south into the United States. Other



**9 pound crystal meth seizure**

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

substances that are seized heading south from Canada include Ecstasy (MDMA), prescription drugs, and methamphetamine precursors. In 2006, there has been a reduction in marijuana seizures at the Blaine Port of Entry.

Traffickers have begun to use air and marine vehicles as well as Ports of Entry further east in an attempt to avoid detection. Another explanation for this trend is the increased number of indoor marijuana grows in Washington, particularly in King County, which avoids crossing the border altogether.

This year, Northwest HIDTA worked in conjunction with Washington State Patrol Regional Training Officer Dan Turner to develop a statewide decentralized Highway Interdiction Training that was given to each of the troopers from September through December to increase awareness of narcotics trafficking indicators and available resources including Northwest HIDTA. Serious Highway Crime Apprehension Team (SHCAT) State Coordinator Chris Bockus worked with the SHCAT teams on advanced training and also put on a 3-day training program in Bellingham, Washington for 75 participants from 14 agencies. In addition, several interdiction training courses have been recently conducted or are scheduled from various training providers: *Patrol Interdiction*, presented by Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training (MCTFT), *Highway Drug Interdiction for Patrol*, presented by Midwest Counterdrug Training Center (MCTC), and *Drug LE for Patrol*, presented by Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC).

## Prevention/Treatment Initiative Meth 360 Program

Although the methamphetamine epidemic in this region has changed, possibly “matured,” in recent years – as illustrated by the shift in focus from clandestine labs to trafficking activities – interest and inquiries on the part of the public continue unabated. In an effort to address this need and to enhance demand reduction endeavors, the Partnership for a Drug-Free America (PDFA) has developed a program of community presentations entitled *Meth 360*.

*Meth 360* is currently being pilot tested in four areas: upstate New York, suburban Virginia, Oklahoma and King and Pierce counties in Washington State. Unlike the Washington Meth Watch Public Education curriculum, –which is designed to train citizens to be presenters in their own communities, –*Meth 360* is designed to be co-delivered by law enforcement and prevention/treatment professionals to community groups, parents, businesses, and civic organizations. In addition, the PDFA has elicited the assistance of public relations firms and community coalitions in each of the four pilot regions to schedule and facilitate the presentations. Here in King and Pierce counties, the public relations firm is Moore Ink. and the assisting coalition is the Safe Streets Campaign based in Tacoma.

The PDFA has developed *Meth 360* in a PowerPoint format (including video features), allowing presentations to be customized for particular areas and audiences; in addition to the full one-hour presentation, two 20-minute presentations have been designed for business groups or audiences comprised primarily of parents. The full presentation is organized into five topic areas: Effects of Meth Use on Individuals; Effects on Communities; Families and Prevention; Treatment and Intervention; and Communities and Prevention. Information sheets on each topic are also provided to presentation attendees, including directions on how to access more detailed information.

The Northwest HIDTA is privileged to be a partner in the *Meth 360* program, and our Prevention/Treatment Manager, Steve Freng has been active as a presenter since its inception in King and Pierce counties. Several dozen presentations have already been conducted in recent months and many more have been scheduled for the coming weeks. In 2007 and beyond, all of the learning from the current pilot phase will be reviewed to improve the presentations – and the scope of the program will be expanded by converting the presentations to an on-line delivery mode, including a self-teaching module for presenters.

If you are interested in receiving training as a presenter during the pilot phase, or if you are interested in scheduling a presentation, you may contact Safe Streets at 253.272.6824 or Teresa Moore of Moore Ink. at 206.721.9540 or [teresa@mooreink.com](mailto:teresa@mooreink.com). For more information on the PDFA or *Meth 360*, go to the PDFA website at [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org). For further information about the Northwest HIDTA Prevention/Treatment Initiative, Steve Freng can be contacted at 206.352.3603 or [sfreg@nw.hidta.org](mailto:sfreg@nw.hidta.org).