

# Illinois State Police Hosts Clandestine Lab Safety Trainings To Combat Illegal Drugs

November 14 2023 10:43 AM



SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois State Police (ISP) Clandestine Lab Team (CLT) recently hosted a Basic 40-hour Clandestine Lab Safety School and two 16-hour Clandestine Micro-Lab recertification courses to combat the increase in unknown drugs found on the street and the rise of labs used to make illicit drugs.

“ISP is committed to combating illegal drugs across the state, including the labs where they are made,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “We want to ensure our people have the necessary training to safely handle clandestine labs as we continue providing these services to law enforcement agencies across the state.”

The Basic 40-hour Clandestine Lab Safety School was provided by the Midwest Counterdrug Training Center and was conducted to increase the number of certified clandestine lab team operators. A total of 19 ISP Division of Criminal Investigation agents from across the state attended the school and were certified as CLT members. CLT is based on the original Methamphetamine Response Team (MRT) that was started in May 2005. Due to retirements and reassignments over the years, the program lost several certified operators with years of combined experience. With the increase in unknown drug substances found on the street, as well as the potential rise of other types of clandestine labs on the horizon, CLT has taken steps to ensure ISP continues to provide certified operators across the state. These ISP officers not only handle ISP cases, they work with local police departments and sheriff’s offices across the state.

The 40-hour training focused on how to safely handle and process all types of clandestine drug labs. During the training field exercises, operators assessed mock lab sites and handled active methamphetamine laboratories. Operators learned how to don chemical and fire-resistant suits, self-contained breathing apparatus, and full-face respirators required to enter potentially dangerous lab sites. Operators also learned how to properly document, sample, dismantle, and overpack dangerous hazardous materials and components for destruction.

The 16-hour Clandestine Micro-Lab course focused on recertifying current operators and certifying new CLT operators in clandestine drug labs, counterfeit pill mills, and fentanyl handling. With these three courses, ISP now has 47 CLT operators statewide.

Since 2007, ISP has been a part of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Authorized Central Storage Program that covers the disposal costs associated with hazardous materials recovered by law enforcement from clandestine drug labs. CLT operators are trained to properly package and transport hazardous materials to containers located throughout the state provided by DEA. ISP provides this service to our local law enforcement partners to minimize or eliminate the high clean-up costs associated with the hazardous materials produced by clandestine drug labs.

