MN Drugged Driving Summit
Nationwide and Statewide Trends
Brief Overview of Drug Trends

• Increase in trafficking of counterfeit pills containing fentanyl.

• Emergence of rainbow and colored fentanyl within Minnesota.

• Common counterfeit pills are oxycotin, Xanax, and Adderall.

• Continued trafficking into the Minnesota region via the I-35 corridor.

• Continued increase in overdose deaths.
Recent Trend: Rainbow Fentanyl

- Increased presence of colored fentanyl in the form of M-30 pills and in bricks.
  - Bricks may appear like chalk.

- Rainbow fentanyl has been nicknamed after real candy products, such as Sweet Tarts, Skittles, and Fruity Pebbles.

- Most of the fentanyl and rainbow fentanyl is produced by the Sinaloa and CJNG cartels.

- (LES) One recent seizure occurred on 01/10/2022 in Anoka, MN.
  - (LES) Colorful, purple, and tan chunks of chalk were recovered.
Recent Trend: Xylazine

• Xylazine is a long-acting sedative and has become increasingly present in the illicit drug supply.

• Xylazine is used for veterinary purposes, such as an animal tranquilizer, sedative, analgesic, and muscle relaxant.

• Xylazine is not a controlled substance but requires a veterinary prescription to be obtained.

• As of mid-2022, all xylazine-involved overdose deaths also contained fentanyl.

Figure 1. Overdoses in Minnesota between 2019 – 2022 where xylazine was present. Data cutoff in the late-summer of 2022.
I-35 Corridor Trends

• In 2022, there were 72 seizures on I-35 recorded in EPIC.
  • 12 of which were in MN.

• Top Drugs Seized along I-35 between 2020-2022:
  • Methamphetamine
    • 783 kilos
  • Cannabis
    • 1,973 kilos & 11,735 du
  • Cocaine
    • 283 kilos
  • Fentanyl
    • 132 kilos & 17,151 du
  • Heroin
    • 9.76 kilos

*Data retrieved from EPIC on 01/11/2023
I-35 Corridor Trends

- Top concealment methods between 2020 – 2022:
  - The seat was the most common hide spot in the vehicle.
  - Clothing was the most common body concealment tactic.
  - A backpack was the most common type of luggage concealment.

- Top 5 vehicle makes between 2020 – 2022:
  - Chevrolet
  - Unknown
  - Ford
  - Dodge
  - Toyota

- Top 5 vehicle tag states between 2020 - 2022:
  - Texas
  - Oklahoma
  - Unreported
  - Kansas
  - Minnesota

*Data retrieved from EPIC on 01/11/2023*
Examples of Recent I-35 Corridor Hides

- **Trends on I-35 in Texas:**
  - Anti-freeze containers
    - Especially common along the border
  - 1 gallon Igloo containers
  - Large coolers
  - 5-gallon paint buckets
    - May have actual paint on top
  - Stone/Marble stands/fixtures/tables filled with liquid.
    - 1 stone fixture held up to 8 kilos of meth
  - Vehicle rims
    - Especially Toyota
  - Floor of travel trailers
    - Ex 1970s trailer lined with new sheet metal/riveting

- **Penske Rental Vehicle**
- **Freezers in altered cardboard boxes**
- **Seized:**
  - 455 THC edibles
  - 33 lbs wax
  - >10,000 vape pens
Relationship Between Overdose Deaths and Drug Seizures

*Sourced from the November 2022 HIDTA NETI Report

Anoka   Dakota   Hennepin   Ramsey   Washington   St. Louis   Olmsted

Confidential - Law Enforcement Information
2021 MN Overdose Death Demographics

• In 2021, SUDORS reported 1,237 overdose deaths in MN.
  • 82.2% of deaths involved at least one opioid.
  • The most common opioid was fentanyl.
  • The most common stimulant was methamphetamine.

• Most impacted populations:
  • Males
  • Alaska Natives
  • 25–34-year-olds

*Sourced from CDC SUDORS Dashboard. Retrieved on 01/12/2023.
Anoka   Dakota   Hennepin   Ramsey   Washington   St. Louis   Olmsted

MN ODMAP Report in 2022

6,246 Fatal and Nonfatal Overdose ODMAP Entries Between 01/01/2022 – 12/31/2022.
This is a 9.1% increase from 2021.

682 Fatal Overdose ODMAP Entries Between 01/01/2022 – 12/31/2022.
This is a 7.9% increase from 2021.

5,564 Nonfatal Overdose ODMAP Entries Between 01/01/2022 – 12/31/2022.
This is a 9.3% increase from 2021.

*Data retrieved on 01/03/2023
MN ODMAP Report in 2022

- In 2022, ODMAP reported:
  - 6,246 suspected overdoses
    - 16.5% suspected of fentanyl
    - 10% suspected of heroin
    - 5.9% suspected of prescription drugs
    - 3.5% suspected of methamphetamine
    - 2.3% suspected of cocaine/crack
  - 682 fatal overdoses
    - 24% suspected of fentanyl
    - 15.5% suspected of heroin
    - 6.6% suspected of prescription drugs
    - 6.5% suspected of methamphetamine
    - 6.3% suspected of cocaine/crack
  - 2,437 Naloxone administrations
    - Administered during 21.5% of fatal ODs
    - Administered during 36.7% of nonfatal ODs

*Data retrieved on 01/03/2023
Reservations

• There are 11 Federally Recognized Indian Tribes in Minnesota: seven Anishinaabe (Chippewa, Ojibwe) reservations and four Dakota (Sioux) communities in Minnesota.

• Red Lake Indian Reservation Overdose Death statistics between 2018 - 2022:
  • 32 overdose deaths
    • 43.75% of deaths occurred in 2022
  • Fentanyl and methamphetamine were the most common substances at fault.
  • Average age of victim’s was 36 years old.
MN HIDTA Seizure Stats

- **Cocaine**
  - Powder cocaine is the predominant form seized.
  - In 2021, 9 drug trafficking organizations in the MN HIDTA region were reported as trafficking cocaine.
  - Main origins of cocaine entering the region were reported as Mexico and Southwest Border states, especially Arizona, California, and Texas.

- **Methamphetamine**
  - 69% increase in meth seizures between 2020 and 2021.
  - In 2021, 32 drug trafficking organizations in the MN HIDTA region were reported as trafficking meth.
  - Minneapolis-St. Paul is a known distribution hub of meth in the Upper Midwest.

*Data retrieved from PMP on 10/28/2022*
MN HIDTA Seizure Stats

- Marijuana and THC
  - In 2021, 8 drug trafficking organizations in the MN HIDTA region were reported as trafficking marijuana and THC products.
  - Source locations are typically from states that have legalized marijuana to some extent, such as California, Colorado, Oregon, and Washington.

*Data retrieved from PMP on 10/28/2022*
MN HIDTA Seizure Stats

• In 2021, 51% of drug trafficking organizations in the MN HIDTA region were reported as trafficking opioids.

• Opioids are primarily sourced to the region from Mexico, China, or Southwest Border states.

• Opioids used to be frequently routed to Minnesota through Chicago, however, recent trends indicate opioids are now more frequently entering the region directly from Southwest Border states.

• Heroin
  • Seizures decreased 33% between 2020 to 2021.

• Fentanyl
  • The amount of powder fentanyl seized increased over 1,000% between 2020 and 2021.
  • The amount of fentanyl dosage units seized decreased 11.9% between 2020 and 2021.

*Data retrieved from PMP on 10/28/2022
SEMVCET & RPD CIU Seizure

• In September 2022, SEMVCET and the Rochester Police CIU unit were assisting investigating a theft. The suspect vehicle had narcotics in plain view.

• A search of two vehicles and one hotel room resulted in the seizure of several pounds of narcotics.

• The suspects claimed to discover the narcotics while burglarizing a storage unit.

• Individuals associated with the storage unit were investigated, and one of which was known to make frequent trips to California.

• Investigators conducted an interdiction on the suspect’s vehicle upon its return to Minnesota from California.

• In total, 72 lbs of fentanyl, 86 lbs of cocaine, 52 lbs of methamphetamine, 10,000g of marijuana, and approximately 40,000 M-30 pills were seized.
Steel Roll Seizure

• Dakota County Sheriff's Office seized 917 lbs of methamphetamine.

• Hides:
  • Three large rolls of industrial sheet metal.
  • Ten large PVC tubes hidden within each roll of sheet metal.

• A nationwide alert about the seizure resulted in a seizure at the U.S.-Mexico border of a second vehicle using the same concealment methods.
Vitamin Bottle Seizure

• In October 2022, Bloomington PD seized an estimated 108,943 blue counterfeit “M30” pills.

• The pills tested positive for fentanyl.

• Hides:
  • 11 commercially sealed vitamin bottles.
  • The bottles were hidden inside a suitcase.
Chip Bag Seizure

• In March 2022, the Southwest Hennepin Drug Task Force, the DEA, and the USPIS seized a significant amount of blue counterfeit “M30” pills suspected to contain fentanyl.

• Hide:
  • Chip Bags

• The chip bags were sent via USPS or carried in checked luggage.
Marijuana in Cans Seizure

• In January 2019, the Hennepin County’s VOTF recovered multiple pounds of marijuana throughout various cities in Minnesota. Distributed via USPS.

• Hides:
  • One-gallon cans containing one-pound sealed bags of marijuana.
  • 6 cans were packed in each cardboard case.

• Hide techniques attempt to visually conceal the marijuana and mask its odor.
Contact Us

MN North Central HIDTA - Investigative Support Center
MNISC@NorthCentralHIDTA.org / 612-596-6742 (Main)

NC HIDTA Team:
• Kent Bailey - NC HIDTA Deputy Director
• Rick Palaia – ISC Manager
• Janelle Myslicki– Hennepin Co
• Breanna Dexter – Washington Co
• Kelsey Tatarek– Anoka Co
• Vacant – Dakota Co
• Samantha Wagner – Ramsey Co
• Ben Kroll – Counterdrug Task Force
• Vacant – Drug Intelligence Officer (DIO)
• Hayley McCarron – Public Health Analyst (PHA)