



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Office of the Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jay Blanton
502-564-2611
502-330-2802

Jill Midkiff
502-564-2611
502-330-1185

**Governor Beshear announces MethCheck
partnership between Kentucky, Indiana**

FRANKFORT, KY (March 16, 2009) – Gov. Steve Beshear joined elected and law enforcement officials from Jefferson, Bullitt and several Indiana counties today in announcing a pilot partnership between Kentucky and southern Indiana, expanding the commonwealth’s statewide electronic pseudoephedrine monitoring system to deter individuals from crossing state lines to purchase the main ingredient in methamphetamine or meth.

While meth labs in many Kentucky counties have dwindled due to MethCheck and laws regulating the sale of pseudoephedrine, labs along some border cities—particularly Louisville, which is separated from Indiana by only a half-mile bridge—have flourished, as individuals simply cross state lines to circumvent Kentucky’s statewide tracking system. In 2008, 29 percent of all reported meth labs discoveries were in Jefferson and Bullitt counties.

To counter that trend, Gov. Beshear today announced that state and local law enforcement agencies have developed a novel solution. They will work with Indiana counties nearest our gateways to adopt local ordinances requiring the sale of pseudoephedrine be handled by a pharmacist and allow these counties to participate in the MethCheck program free of charge for one year.

So far, Floyd and Clark counties have passed local ordinances. Kentucky-based Appriss, which runs the MethCheck program, is working now to link the system, which will grant full access to sheriffs’ deputies in Clark and Floyd counties and will include full participation by every drug store in these two counties.

(more)

“This partnership offers a tremendous tool for plugging an opportunity that has allowed individuals to circumvent our laws with relative ease and establish meth labs in Kentucky with ingredients purchased elsewhere,” Beshear said. He added the Office of Drug Control Policy will monitor the success of the pilot and work with other border cities that may benefit from a similar program.

This pilot program marks the first time that states have shared electronic pseudoephedrine purchase information on a real-time basis.

“We’re delighted to be involved in MethCheck and recognize its importance in the fight against meth abuse,” said Louisville Metro Police Department Chief Robert White. “This program will extend the investigative reach of our detectives and allow them to be more efficient in tracking people who are crossing the river to skirt Kentucky’s pseudoephedrine law.”

"This is a great step for Kentucky and Indiana law enforcement for creating a partnership in combating the methamphetamine issue that has devastated our communities," said Stephen Luce, executive director of the Indiana Sheriff's Association. "This collaboration is just the beginning of continuing the vision in strengthening public safety in our communities."

In its first nine months of operation, MethCheck has recorded more than 850,000 sales and has successfully blocked more than 13,000 transactions that would have violated state and federal laws. Those transactions represent 44,000 grams of pseudoephedrine that potentially could have been diverted to produce methamphetamine.

###