



For Immediate Release:
November 20, 2009

Contact: Charlie Cichon
NADDI
(410) 321-4600

National system aims to minimize diversion of cold and allergy medicine in methamphetamine production

National Precursor Log Exchange modeled after a successful Kentucky program

Louisville, Ky. – The National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators (NADDI) today announced a new initiative in the war on methamphetamine. The National Precursor Log Exchange (NPLEx) is a multi-state electronic tracking program that enforces purchase limitations on over-the-counter (OTC) medicines containing pseudoephedrine in real-time at the point of sale. The technology for NPLEx is based on a system that was developed and tested in Kentucky in 2005 and expanded statewide in late 2007. Today Kentucky, Illinois, and Louisiana are executing agreements with NADDI to become the first three states to adopt NPLEx as their electronic tracking program.

NPLEx provides law enforcement agencies across the country with free access to the multi-state electronic log of cold and allergy medicine purchases. The system helps retailers and consumers stay in compliance with state and federal laws that place restrictions on these medicines. These OTC cold and allergy medicines contain pseudoephedrine, a key ingredient diverted to illegally manufacture methamphetamine. The program has been modeled after the successful efforts in Kentucky to combat domestic meth production. The cost of deploying and supporting the NPLEx system has been covered by a private-public partnership that NADDI negotiated with the leading manufacturers of these medicines. Consequently, states that are offered NPLEx can deploy and support the system without the use of government funds.

“Rarely are states able to easily work together to tackle a problem that crosses state lines,” said Charlie Cichon, director of NADDI. “We believe many states will adopt NPLEx over the next several years, making it more difficult for these common medicines to be diverted into the illegal manufacture of methamphetamine.”

The NPLEx program is now being offered at no cost to states that have passed legislation to adopt real-time tracking of the medicines. This initiative has proven to be successful at enforcing the legal purchase limits enacted by state and federal legislators. The program has also given law enforcement a powerful new intelligence tool to locate more people involved in these crimes, and to find a higher percentage of meth labs.

“Like most states, we have felt the pain associated with this terrible drug,” said Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear. “We are proud that Kentucky has been able to lead in the development of this technology platform. By reaching across our borders, we are preventing people from diverting illegal amounts of these cold and allergy medicines for the manufacture of methamphetamine.”

The technology is used today to deny more than 5,000 monthly purchases of cold and allergy medicines in Kentucky that would otherwise exceed the legal limits. Law enforcement is able to immediately access electronic records, allowing them to better track meth lab suppliers.

“We are happy to be one of the first states to join the NPLEx coalition. In these difficult fiscal times, it is unusual that we find a way to implement solutions without the use of taxpayer funds,” said Illinois State Police Lt. Colonel Rob Haley. “We are excited and ready to put this program in place, making it more difficult for criminals to divert these products for illegal use.”

Louisiana’s legislature passed a bill requiring electronic tracking, and officials there are seeking to establish NPLEx this year. “The only way for us to effectively fight the production of illegal meth is to work together,” said Louisiana State Police Captain Charlie Dupuy.

In July, the National Sheriffs’ Association and its Drug Enforcement Committee passed a resolution endorsing an industry-funded solution for electronic tracking of pseudoephedrine purchases in real time.

“It is uncommon to see action of this magnitude this quickly, particularly when dealing with multiple states and some reasonably complicated technology,” said NSA Drug Enforcement Committee Chair Sheriff Keith Cain. “It is exciting to see this program’s adoption around the country and I believe it will play a significant role in helping law enforcement deal a severe blow to the meth lab underworld.”

The National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators (NADDI) is a non-profit organization that facilitates cooperation between law enforcement, healthcare professionals, state regulatory agencies and pharmaceutical manufacturers in the prevention and investigation of prescription drug diversion.

###