



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION**  
April 27, 2011

**CONTACT:** José A. Álvarez (619) 515-6635

## **METH ABUSE DECLINING IN COUNTY**

### ***Deaths Down; Study Shows an Addict Can Cost Taxpayers \$2,000 per Month***

San Diego meth use is declining. Five of the six best indicators of the meth problem in the region show a significant drop, according to the most recent Methamphetamine Strike Force Report Card.

“San Diego County is no longer the meth capital of the world. Our efforts to eradicate meth from our communities are having positive results,” said Supervisor Dianne Jacob, who led the effort to create the Meth Strike Force in 1996. “The tide on meth has turned thanks to the great collaboration of the approximately 70 organizations and agencies that comprise the Meth Strike Force.”

When comparing data from 2005 to results from 2009, progress was made on the following:

- Meth deaths are down (43%)
- Treatment admissions dropped (17%)
- Number of adults arrested who tested positive for meth declined (41%)
- Number of arrests because of meth—sales and possession—is down (53%)
- Meth cleanup/seizures also dropped (39%)

However, not all news in the Meth Report Card was positive. The number of emergency department amphetamine mentions has remained unchanged with 2,552 reported in 2006 and 2,548 in 2009.

“While we’re seeing significant progress in some areas, meth continues to take a toll on people’s physical and mental wellbeing,” said Nick Macchione, Director of the County’s Health and Human Services Agency, which is spearheading the Live Well, San Diego! initiative, the County’s 10 year plan to improve the health and wellbeing of area residents.

Aside from human loss, meth also takes a financial toll on communities. A new study, commissioned by the County and conducted by the San Diego Association of Governments, revealed that dealing with a meth addict can cost County taxpayers \$2,000 per month. A copy of the analysis is available at [www.sandag.org/cjc](http://www.sandag.org/cjc).

“Meth addiction is not cheap. It is a major public health problem that costs U.S. and County taxpayers billions of dollars every year,” added Macchione.

A meth user can be anyone—teens, parents, college students, men, and women. According to the 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, about 12.6 million Americans age 12 or older reported using methamphetamine at least once.

Christina Manis, age 27, used meth for more than 10 years. In that time span, she lost jobs. She lost her family. She lost her freedom. “I was in and out of jail,” said Manis, who’s been clean since May 2009, when she was incarcerated for vehicle theft for one year. “That’s when I got my moment of clarity. Treatment taught me that there is light at the end of the tunnel and has taught me how to be a productive member of society.”

People with a meth addiction or who suspect drug activity in their community are encouraged to call the Meth Hotline at 1-877-no2meth (662-6384). Meth crime can also be reported online at [www.no2meth.org](http://www.no2meth.org). The calls and reports are completely confidential.

###

FOLLOW THE [COUNTY](#) ON [TWITTER](#), [FACEBOOK](#) AND [YOUTUBE](#)

COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE  
1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 208 • SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-2472