

## ***What you need to know about meth contamination in homes***

by Adam Smith

We tackled the hard-hitting issue of meth contamination in a series of blogs last year and they proved to be one of the most widely read (and shared) topics on our website. Now, we've brought together the key information from our previous articles, along with a few important updates. Whether you own an investment property, or are looking to sell or buy a house, it's an essential read.



### **Why should I be worried about meth contamination?**

Methamphetamine or meth is created using a highly dangerous cocktail of chemicals which can leave a long-lasting and toxic legacy. It's highly hazardous, difficult to spot and, at worst, could require costly decontamination and seriously devalue your property.

Meth can leach into walls, floors, ceilings and even electrical fittings. Not to mention the dangers of household items like soft toys, furniture or carpet being exposed to the toxins. The worse-case scenario is if the home has been used as a 'P lab' to manufacture the drug.

### **How can I tell if my property has been contaminated by meth?**

Identifying if a home has been contaminated by meth isn't an easy task. It can be extremely difficult to see or smell any evidence. Some obvious signs for concern could include:

- Specific areas of the property being freshly painted for no apparent reason, such as around doors or patches on ceilings
- Staining or bleaching around exterior drains
- Strong odours of chemical cleaners

However, it's usually a hidden problem that's difficult to detect. The experts agree that the best way to avoid a meth contamination headache is to use an accurate test.

### **Meth testing a property**

If you're a property investor, or are considering selling or buying a house, investing in meth testing could be a canny move. Here's why:

- Own a rental property? Completing meth testing between tenancies is an ideal deterrent.
- Buying a house? Consider adding meth testing as another component of your due diligence.
- Selling a house? Meth testing is one easy way you can assure prospective buyers about the quality of your home.

### ***Meth testing options***

While 'DIY' meth testing kits are cheap to buy, they are not necessary reliable. You'll need to have done your research and know exactly which areas of the home need to be swabbed.

We believe that professional lab-based testing is the only way to accurately identify meth contamination. It will also identify the extent of the problem, and whether further investigation is worthwhile.

As a guide, [MethSolutions](#) are experts in this field, and can test your property with the cost starting at \$189 + GST, depending on the size of the property.

### **When does a property need to be decontaminated for meth?**

The [Standard NZS8510](#) released in June 2017 recommends decontamination on a property where meth levels of 1.5 micrograms or less/100cm<sup>2</sup> are detected in high-use areas. This is any area accessible by adults and/or children.

### **Protect your property, and your health**

There's no doubt that meth contamination is a very scary thought (especially when you read media articles like [this one](#)). At Iron Bridge, it's an issue we take extremely seriously. Our property management and real estate teams are fully trained about meth use in homes.

Whether your property journey is focused on investing, buying or selling a house, we believe that professional meth testing is a very smart and cost-effective decision.

**If you'd like some more expert advice about minimising the risk of meth contamination in investment properties, [get in touch with our team](#).**