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Wisconsin

Drug Threat Assessment



National Drug Intelligence Center
U.S. Department of Justice



Wisconsin Drug Threat Assessment

*National Drug Intelligence Center
319 Washington Street, 5th Floor
Johnstown, PA 15901-1622
(814) 532-4601*

Preface

This report is a strategic assessment that addresses the status and outlook of the drug threat in Wisconsin. Analytical judgment determined the threat posed by each drug type or category, taking into account the most current quantitative and qualitative information on availability, demand, production or cultivation, transportation, and distribution, as well as the effects of a particular drug on abusers and society as a whole. While NDIC sought to incorporate the latest available information, a time lag often exists between collection and publication of data, particularly demand-related data sets. NDIC anticipates that this drug threat assessment will be useful to policymakers, law enforcement personnel, and treatment providers at the federal, state, and local levels because it draws upon a broad range of information sources to describe and analyze the drug threat in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Drug Threat Assessment

Executive Summary

Milwaukee is an ideal drug transportation and distribution center in part because of its geographic location and multifaceted transportation infrastructure. Three types of organizations are responsible for most of the transportation and wholesale distribution of drugs in Wisconsin: Mexican drug trafficking organizations transport cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine; Nigerian criminal groups distribute Southeast Asian heroin; and Dominican criminal groups distribute cocaine and South American heroin. The most common means that transporters use to ship drugs into Milwaukee are private vehicles, commercial trucks, bus services, package delivery services, air parcel services or couriers on commercial flights, and railways. Organized street gangs such as the Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords, and Latin Kings control the distribution and retail sales of cocaine, heroin, and marijuana not only in Milwaukee, but also throughout the state. Violent crime associated with street gangs, while declining in some major urban areas, is increasing in suburban and rural areas of the state as these gangs expand their drug markets.

The primary drug threats in Wisconsin are the availability and abuse of powdered cocaine and the subsequent conversion, distribution, and abuse of crack cocaine. Most cocaine in the state is transported either directly from the Southwest Border or via Chicago. Law enforcement authorities report that crack cocaine is the primary drug threat in central and eastern Wisconsin. Deaths attributed to cocaine abuse were reported in record numbers in Wisconsin in 1997. Moreover, data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Treatment Episode Data Set show an increase in admissions for cocaine abuse from 1993 to 1998.

The availability of marijuana transported from Mexico remains a problem in the state, and the cultivation of domestic marijuana in indoor grow operations is increasing. Domestic marijuana distributors are “cutting” their product with Mexican marijuana to extend distribution operations year-round and to gain inroads into Mexican distribution operations. These relationships may lead to the increased availability of other drugs since most Mexican drug trafficking organizations in the region also distribute cocaine and methamphetamine.

Methamphetamine continues to be transported eastward through the Great Lakes Region from Minnesota into northwestern Wisconsin and from Iowa into southwestern Wisconsin. As methamphetamine abuse increases, the violent criminal activity associated with it may rival or exceed that associated with crack cocaine abuse. Unpredictable behavior by methamphetamine abusers has contributed to increases in domestic violence, and local methamphetamine production increasingly endangers law enforcement, the environment, and surrounding communities.

While not as significant as the abuse of those drugs already mentioned, heroin abuse continues to increase, especially in the Milwaukee area. Chicago and New York City remain the most frequently cited heroin sources for the Milwaukee area. Nigerian and Dominican criminals are increasing their distribution operations in Milwaukee, possibly moving as far as the Madison area. Heroin's highly addictive nature forces many users to resort to crime to fund their habit, much like crack cocaine users.

There is growing concern regarding the abuse of MDMA and other club drugs in Wisconsin. MDMA availability and abuse increased in 1999. GHB and ketamine, both of which have been factors in several rape and poisoning cases in Wisconsin, are also a law enforcement concern. The increasing popularity of these drugs, especially among school age youth, will cause significant problems in the state, particularly in college towns such as Milwaukee, Madison, and La Crosse.

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Wisconsin.
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Wisconsin Drug Threat Assessment

Overview

Wisconsin is the twelfth largest manufacturing state in the nation. The northern forest and lake country is sparsely settled, the southern two-thirds is agricultural, and the southeastern belt along Lake Michigan is highly industrialized. Major transportation routes around Milwaukee serve the state's heavily populated southeastern section and connect to Chicago, Illinois, 90 miles to the south.

Milwaukee is the seventeenth largest city in the United States. Its importance as a leading transportation hub and distribution center for legitimate goods mirrors its position in the drug trade. In part because of its geographic location and multifaceted transportation infrastructure, Milwaukee is the strategic center for the transportation and distribution of drugs in Wisconsin.

The most common means that transporters use to ship drugs into Milwaukee are private and rental vehicles, commercial trucks, package delivery services, air package services or couriers on commercial flights, and railways. Drugs transported by vehicles, concealed in shipments of legitimate goods, or shipped via mail or package services have an excellent chance of reaching their destination because of the sheer volume of vehicles, parcels, and railcars that transit the state on a daily basis. Milwaukee is an important center for

Fast Facts	
Wisconsin	
Population (1999)	5.3 million
U.S. population ranking	18th
Median household income (1999)	\$41,327
Unemployment rate (2000)	3.4%
Land area	54,314 square miles
Shoreline	820 miles
Capital	Madison
Other principal cities	Milwaukee, Green Bay
Number of counties	72
Principal industries	Agriculture, manufacturing, tourism

processing land freight. More than 50 commercial truck carriers and a variety of independent trucking firms operate from Milwaukee. These firms could provide drug trafficking organizations with ready access to the eastern part of the country as well as to Canada and Mexico.

Milwaukee's interconnected highway system facilitates the transport of drugs into Wisconsin, not only from the Southwest Border of the United States but also from the East and West Coasts. Milwaukee and suburban Milwaukee County are located at the intersections of Interstates 94 and 43. These interstates link Milwaukee directly to Chicago, Illinois, and Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, which are source cities for drugs and weapons in Milwaukee. Drugs, money, and weapons are transported frequently between Minneapolis-St. Paul and Milwaukee as well as between Chicago and Milwaukee. Milwaukee is linked to the rest of Wisconsin by the interstate system. Interstate 94 west from Milwaukee connects to Madison, the state capital. Continuing west, Interstate 94 connects with Interstate 90 to La Crosse in western Wisconsin or to Eau Claire in the northwestern part of the state. West of Madison, Interstate 94 connects with Interstate 39 north to Wisconsin's lake resort area. Interstate 43 north of Milwaukee connects to the major industrial cities on the western shore of Lake Michigan and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Milwaukee's General Mitchell International Airport is a connector airport to major hubs around the country. It is a port of entry for flights directly from Jamaica, the Bahamas, and Mexico. Airfreight is shipped through General Mitchell International Airport on the many commercial airlines, package carriers, and smaller freight haulers. Cocaine, LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), and marijuana have been transported in the large amounts of airfreight shipped daily through this airport. The Milwaukee High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) reports that more than 200 kilograms of marijuana and more than 20 kilograms of cocaine were seized there during 1999. Metropolitan Milwaukee also has numerous private and regional small and midsize airports that serve as transportation centers for private and commercial use.

The Port of Milwaukee is another possible entry point for drugs into Wisconsin. Drugs could be secreted easily among the tons of legitimate cargo processed through the Port of Milwaukee.

The Port of Milwaukee is the second largest port on Lake Michigan and is open to shipping from April through December. Most of the cargo vessels arriving in Milwaukee carry steel from France, Germany, the Netherlands (a major source of MDMA, also known as ecstasy), and Great Britain. Canadian shipments normally consist of road salt from Ontario and pig iron from Quebec.

Milwaukee is the focal point for the delivery and transshipment of drugs throughout Wisconsin. Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) ship most of the cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine into the state, and their strong foothold in Wisconsin, primarily in Milwaukee, will allow them to continue operations. Jamaican, Nigerian, and Dominican criminal groups as well as Chicago-based street gangs are secondary transporters, predominantly into the Milwaukee area.

Madison is a secondary distribution center for the state, primarily to cities in central and western Wisconsin such as Appleton, Beloit, Eau Claire, and Wausau. Madison is Wisconsin's capital and home to the University of Wisconsin with over 40,000 students. I-90, a major east-west route connecting directly with Chicago and ending in Seattle, Washington, as well as State Route 151, which connects to I-80, pass through Madison, providing DTOs easy access to the city as well as other areas of the state.

African American and Hispanic street gangs, particularly organized street gangs such as the Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords, and Latin Kings, dominate the street-level distribution of most drugs, particularly crack cocaine. According to a 1999 Wisconsin Division of Narcotics Enforcement (DNE) report, the Gangster Disciples distributes drugs in 22 Wisconsin counties, the Latin Kings in 19, and the Vice Lords in 11. These gangs survive financially through the sale and distribution of drugs. Most federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Wisconsin cite the violent crime associated with gang-related drug distribution as a serious criminal threat to the state. Violent crime associated with these street gangs is increasing in suburban and rural areas as they expand to other markets.

- **The Gangster Disciples**, the largest Chicago-based street gang, has been identified in over 40 states across the nation. In Wisconsin, the gang sells drugs primarily in low-income urban areas. Most Gangster Disciples members are African American. Most of the Gangster Disciples gangs operating in Wisconsin were locally organized and took the name of the national organization to increase profits and intimidate other gangs. They do not pay dues to Chicago and are not recognized as part of the Gangster Disciple Nation by the national gangs. Their drug sources are primarily through Chicago, but not necessarily from the Gangster Disciples; they will buy drugs from any source available.
- **The Vice Lords** in Wisconsin is essentially a local drug dealing organization and is not affiliated with the Vice Lords national organization in Chicago. The Vice Lords in Milwaukee is one of the African American gangs that controls the north side of the city. It receives its drug supply primarily through Chicago, but not necessarily from the Vice Lords; members will buy drugs from any source available.
- **The Latin Kings**, also known as the Almighty Latin King Nation, is a predominantly Hispanic street gang. It is made up of over 70 factions that operate under an overall leadership structure. Members have expanded their drug trafficking throughout the state and nation.

Gang-related violence in Wisconsin has risen over the past 10 years, which can be attributed in part to the rise in gang-related drug distribution throughout the state. A 1999 Wisconsin DNE report shows that 60 percent of reporting units indicated that gangs operating in their jurisdictions are involved in drug trafficking. Another 1999 Wisconsin DNE report states that 59 percent of Wisconsin's single and multicounty areas reported that gangs distribute drugs in their areas. A Wisconsin Statistical Analysis Center report noted that juvenile arrests for drug offenses steadily increased from 1990 to 1995, when they

accounted for 22 percent of all drug violation arrests. According to a 1999 University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee study, 68 percent of juveniles involved in gang-related homicides sold drugs. Wisconsin local law enforcement agencies report that gangs are involved in assaults on law enforcement personnel and in homicides, drive-by shootings, carjackings, home invasion robberies, and weapons trafficking. The homicide rate in Milwaukee rose 16 percent (107 to 124) from 1998 to 1999, when approximately 85 percent of the homicides were attributed to gangs and drugs. So far, figures indicate that Milwaukee's homicide rate in 2000 was on pace with 1999. Gun seizures from gang members in Milwaukee and the surrounding suburbs have increased markedly. Many of these guns are either stolen or obtained through straw purchases (a "front man" buys the weapons and transfers them illegally to an individual or group).

The nature of the drug problem in Wisconsin varies by area. The primary drug threats in eastern and central Wisconsin are the availability, distribution, and abuse of powdered and crack cocaine. The increasing availability of high-purity heroin and the number of new users represent a secondary problem, particularly in the Milwaukee area. Marijuana remains the most readily available and most widely abused drug throughout Wisconsin. Methamphetamine production and use are expanding from the neighboring states of Iowa and Minnesota into northwestern and southwestern Wisconsin. Drugs such as MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine), LSD, and GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate) are becoming increasingly popular, particularly among young people in urban areas and in college towns.

Drug abuse is a significant health, social, public safety, and economic problem in Wisconsin. State sources estimate that there are 390,000 drug abusers in Wisconsin and that more than 60,000 residents received publicly funded treatment for drug abuse in 1998. Statewide prison statistics show that 67 percent of new inmates between 1997 and 1998 were identified as needing drug treatment. The Wisconsin Department of Corrections

indicated that this number varies between 60 and 80 percent of new inmates from year to year.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services, substance abuse is the fourth leading cause of death in Wisconsin after heart disease, cancer, and stroke. For example, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services indicates a significant increase in drug abuse poisoning and dependency deaths from 1975 to 1997. More than 800 documented deaths and more than 90,000 arrests attributable to drug abuse were reported in Wisconsin in 1998.

Table 1. Milwaukee Area Drug Availability and Trends in Abuse

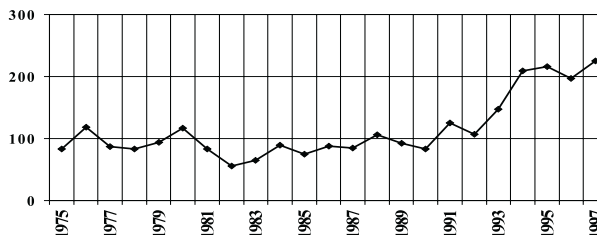
Drug	Availability	Abuse
Cocaine	High	High
Depressants	Low	Decreasing
Designer Drugs	Low	Increasing
Heroin	Medium	Increasing
LSD	Low	Increasing
Marijuana	High	Increasing
Methamphetamine	Medium	Increasing

Source: Milwaukee HIDTA.

The social costs associated with drug abuse in Wisconsin are significant. The state spent an estimated \$2.7 billion to fight drug abuse and ancillary problems in 1997, of which almost 70 percent (\$1.89 billion) was spent fighting crime. Medical- and death-related costs, as well as consequent lost productivity, accounted for the remaining \$.81 billion. Drug abuse also contributes to AIDS/HIV transmission, birth defects, and the number of people seeking assistance from emergency departments and other medical providers. Fifty-six percent of these costs are borne by the government, private insurance, and victims of drug-related crime, while 44 percent of the burden falls on abusers and their families.

Young people in Wisconsin continue to face pressure from their peers to use drugs, and children often are affected indirectly by drug use. In 1999, 19 percent of young adults and 12 percent of teens reported using drugs within the past 30 days. One Milwaukee inner-city hospital estimates that approximately one-third of its pregnant patients test positive for drugs.

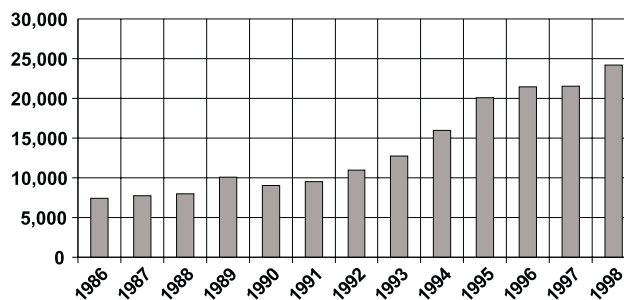
Chart 1. Drug Abuse Deaths, Wisconsin, 1975–1997



Source: Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, *Wisconsin Alcohol and Drug Abuse Indicator Trends, 1997*.

Drug arrests have increased substantially, indicating a rise in crime and drug abuse throughout Wisconsin. From 1986 to 1998, Wisconsin’s total drug arrests rose approximately 220 percent. For the period 1995 to 1998, drug sales arrests increased by 7.6 percent and drug possession arrests increased by 52.3 percent.

Chart 2. Drug Arrests, Wisconsin, 1986–1998



Source: Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance, *1997–1999 Anti-Drug Abuse Strategy*.

A 1999 Wisconsin DNE price survey based on controlled buys, undercover purchases, and on information provided by informants indicates that prices for powdered and crack cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine dropped or stabilized over the previous 5 years, an indication that these predominant drugs in Wisconsin continue to be readily available.

Cocaine

The primary drug threats in Wisconsin are the availability and abuse of powdered cocaine transported into the state by Mexican DTOs and the subsequent conversion, distribution, and abuse of crack cocaine. Mexican DTOs transport large shipments of powdered cocaine from the Southwest Border intermixed with legitimate goods in tractor-trailers, and Mexican criminal

groups are the primary wholesale distributors of powdered cocaine. Once the powdered cocaine is converted, African American and Hispanic street gangs control the retail distribution of crack cocaine throughout the state. Crack cocaine is the drug most often associated with violent crime in Wisconsin.

Abuse

Law enforcement authorities report that crack cocaine is the principal drug threat in central and eastern Wisconsin. A record number of deaths (60) were attributed to cocaine abuse in Wisconsin in 1997—an 86 percent increase from 1996 and a 130 percent increase from 1993. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) information also shows an increase in cocaine abuse, with admissions increasing from 431 in 1993 to 785 in 1998. The Milwaukee HIDTA reports a rise in cocaine-related offenses from 1993 to 1998. It reports cocaine sales arrests increased 8.6 percent and possession arrests rose 10.7 percent.

The rise in powdered and crack cocaine abuse has affected families drastically, especially in Milwaukee's inner city. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Milwaukee Field Office, most crack cocaine abuse still occurs in the inner city, predominantly in Milwaukee, and directly affects lower income and African American families. The U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District reports that approximately 8,000 to 10,000 cases of child abuse and neglect are cited each year in Milwaukee, almost all of which can be attributed to drug abuse, particularly cocaine.

One Milwaukee inner-city hospital estimates that approximately one-third of its pregnant patients test positive for drugs and that of these patients, those most often testing positive for cocaine are African American. A survey at the Mount Sinai Medical Center, the major metropolitan hospital in Milwaukee, revealed that 1 in 6 women giving birth used drugs—usually cocaine—compared with a national average of 1 in 20.

Although once confined to urban areas, the abuse of powdered and crack cocaine is spreading to suburban and rural areas. Powdered and crack cocaine abuse is a growing problem in small to midsize cities such as Appleton, Green Bay, La Crosse, Madison, and Racine and in rural areas such as Door, Clark, Menominee, Shawnee, and Taylor Counties. The Forest, Menominee, Kenosha, and Brown County Sheriff's Departments all indicate that crack cocaine is a major threat in their areas and that the threat is increasing. The Janesville Police Department states that the greatest drug threat in its area is crack cocaine, and the West Central Drug Task Force reports that the number of investigations and arrests related to both powdered and crack cocaine increased in 1999.

Availability

Cocaine, both powdered and crack, continues to dominate the Milwaukee area, primarily because of the city's proximity to Chicago, although the drug is more readily available in smaller communities throughout Wisconsin than ever before. According to survey responses and phone interviews with law enforcement from Appleton, Green Bay, La Crosse, Madison, and Racine as well as from Door, Clark, Menominee, Shawnee, and Taylor Counties, the availability of powdered and crack cocaine is increasing, leading to an increase in cocaine-related crime, violence, and abuse.

A Milwaukee County Deputy District Attorney who was the lead prosecutor for a special drug court system stated that since the system's inception in 1990, most of the nearly 15,000 cases tried involved cocaine. In a comparison of Wisconsin Task Force drug charges from 1995 to 1999, powdered and crack cocaine investigations rose 1.4 percent and 68.8 percent, respectively. The Assistant District Attorney for the Metropolitan Milwaukee Drug Enforcement Group reported that cases involving crack cocaine outnumbered cases for all other drug types in 1998. The number of Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory drug cases for powdered cocaine was relatively stable from 1997 to 1999; however, the number of cases for crack rose over the same period, from 1,036 to 1,140. The number of cocaine samples submitted to the state crime laboratories for testing is one indicator of the supply of these drugs in the state.

Along with the increased numbers of cocaine-related seizures and arrests, a decrease in prices indicates that cocaine is more readily available in Wisconsin than in previous years. From 1996 to 1999, the price of powdered cocaine fell from \$90 to \$75 per gram and crack cocaine fell from \$200 to \$140 per gram. The Milwaukee HIDTA states that an influx in the number of independent traffickers operating in the Milwaukee area resulted in a rise in crack cocaine availability, thereby flooding the market and dropping ounce-quantity prices. Powdered

cocaine typically is transported into the Milwaukee area in uncut multikilogram quantities. Most of the powdered cocaine is converted into crack cocaine, which is retailed in 1/8- to 1-ounce packets. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Milwaukee District Office states, however, that powdered cocaine remains readily available in kilogram quantities in the metropolitan area.

The purity levels for powdered and crack cocaine in Wisconsin have risen. In 1997, the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory in Milwaukee tested 809 crack cocaine exhibits for purity. Most (694) averaged 60 percent pure, but the purity of 115 of the exhibits exceeded 80 percent. The crime laboratory tested 358 powdered cocaine exhibits in 1997. Of these, 130 were at least 80 percent pure and 180 were at least 60 percent pure; the other 48 exhibits tested below 60 percent. In March 2000, the Milwaukee HIDTA stated that agents routinely seize cocaine at purity levels of 80 percent or more. Cocaine seized in Milwaukee exceeded the national average in purity in more than 80 percent of the exhibits tested, indicating that crack distributors—at least within the Milwaukee area—often are able to obtain high-quality cocaine.

Violence

The violent criminal activity related to the distribution of crack cocaine, primarily by street gangs, is a significant problem throughout Wisconsin, especially in the Milwaukee area. In 1999, 31 percent of Wisconsin drug enforcement agencies reported that gangs were an escalating problem and that there was a link between gangs, crack, and violence. A Milwaukee County Deputy District Attorney stated that numerous studies indicate that the primary reason for the increase in violent crime in the county is increased crack cocaine distribution. The distribution and abuse of powdered and crack cocaine are linked to most homicides, overdose deaths, violent crimes, child abuse and neglect cases, and drug arrests in the county. Total Wisconsin task force arrests for crack-related violent crime increased 14.5 percent from 1997 to 1998.

Gang migration from urban areas to smaller cities as well as to suburban and rural areas has spread the availability of crack cocaine and associated violent criminal activity throughout Wisconsin. Gangs move from Milwaukee to smaller communities where the price of crack and powdered cocaine is much higher to increase profits and to escape law enforcement scrutiny in urban areas. Consequently, drug-related crime and violence are affecting many of Wisconsin's smaller communities. For example, Green Bay officials report steady gang migration from St. Paul, Milwaukee, and Chicago, estimating that 40 percent of their crime is gang-related. Gangs

In Milwaukee, officials state that Asian gangs, such as the Asian Crips and Oriental Ruthless Boys, and Hispanic gangs are increasing their levels of violence because of turf and drug issues. On Milwaukee's South Side, violence escalated after the 1997 federal indictments of the Latin Kings' hierarchy. A perceived lack of leadership in the Latin Kings prompted rival gangs to attempt takeovers, precipitating an increase in gang-related violence.

Source: Milwaukee HIDTA Report 2001 and Milwaukee Police Department.

commit approximately 10 percent of the crime in Appleton, where local officials report that crack cocaine sales and use have increased as a result of street gang activity, specifically by the Gangster Disciples and Vice Lords. Fitchburg officials report that violence associated with gang drug activity has increased and that gangs commit approximately 15 percent of the crime in the city, including home invasion robberies, aggravated batteries, shootings, and automobile theft. Kenosha officials state that gangs are responsible for most of their violent crime including shootings, stabbings, home invasion robberies, batteries, and carjackings. Gangs in Kenosha are becoming more covert and more sophisticated in their drug operations. Rival gangs form "Dope Posses," pooling assets and working together to increase their drug profits. Rival gangs may even work on the same corner selling drugs.

Production

Street gangs convert powdered cocaine into crack cocaine primarily in Milwaukee for local distribution. The conversion process normally takes place in gang members' homes or stash houses in the areas where the crack is to be distributed to avoid the stiffer criminal penalties assessed for transporting wholesale quantities.

The Milwaukee County Sheriff reports that African American and other independent gangs convert 80 percent of the powdered cocaine transported into the area into crack. The Central Area Drug Enforcement Group reports that African American dealers tied to Chicago-based gangs transport powdered cocaine to Wausau,

and that approximately 75 percent is converted into crack cocaine for retail sales. Both the Brown County Sheriff and a Racine County Metro Drug

Unit detective report that 50 percent of the powdered cocaine transported into their areas is converted into crack by African American gangs.

Transportation

Mexican DTOs are responsible for most of the transportation of powdered cocaine, according to the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance. The DEA Chicago Field Division, which includes the Milwaukee District Office, states that Mexican DTOs are the single largest suppliers of cocaine throughout its jurisdiction. The Wisconsin DNE states that many local cocaine distribution groups have connections to Mexican DTOs and use the DTOs to transport cocaine supplies from the Southwest Border. The Wisconsin DNE, the Milwaukee HIDTA, and DEA Milwaukee indicate that Mexican DTOs transport large quantities of powdered cocaine to Wisconsin directly from Mexico or through California, Florida, and Texas; the Milwaukee HIDTA adds Chicago to this list of source areas. Approximately 20 to 40 percent of the cocaine transported to Wisconsin is shipped directly from California; the rest is shipped through Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis, and from cities in Texas.

The transportation of cocaine shipments originating at the Southwest Border is increasing. The organizations responsible for the increased flow of cocaine into the DEA Milwaukee District Office's area of responsibility are divided into three groups: Mexico-based DTOs, U.S.-based criminal groups with ties to Mexico-based DTOs, and street gangs. One Mexico-based DTO, the Vicente Carrillo-Fuentes organization based along the Juarez, Mexico–El Paso, Texas, border, is the primary supplier of cocaine to the Great Lakes Region. Primarily a transportation organization, the Carrillo-Fuentes organization directs an extensive air and land network, orchestrating large-scale smuggling of cocaine from South America to the United States via Mexico. Chicago-based Mexican organizations with ties to Mexico-based DTOs, such as the Herrera organization,

are midlevel distributors. The Herrera organization transports large quantities of cocaine from the Southwest Border to Chicago, a regional source of supply. The Herrera organization typically contracts drivers of legitimate trucking companies to transport drugs hidden in legitimate shipments. Hispanic and African American street gangs based in Milwaukee are responsible for street-level sales. Gangs such as the Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords, and Latin Kings dominate the market in Milwaukee and often have ties to Chicago-based gangs.

Transportation groups ship cocaine to and throughout Wisconsin using a variety of means, including commercial and private vehicles, rail and air transport, and couriers. Cocaine frequently is concealed in automobiles, minivans, recreational vehicles, and tractor-trailers, which are used predominantly for bulk shipments. Transportation groups extensively employ tractor-trailers using the U.S. interstate system to ship cocaine north from the Southwest Border. According to the DEA Chicago Field Division and the Wisconsin DNE, the concealment of drugs in legitimate cargo, especially produce shipments, is an increasing problem. Transportation groups believe that law enforcement seldom stops these shipments because the produce may spoil, rendering law enforcement agencies liable for lost revenue.

Transportation groups often use private vehicles outfitted with sophisticated false or hidden compartments to conceal drug shipments. A Racine County Metro Drug Unit detective reported two seizures of powdered cocaine (2 and 3 kilograms) from a private vehicle in September 2000. The transporters were shipping the drug to Racine from Chicago.

Suppliers in Chicago sometimes package street quantities of powdered cocaine in plastic sandwich bags for transport. The cocaine is transported by private vehicle from the Chicago area to Milwaukee and stored in local residences prior to retail sale. In 1999, during a traffic stop, the Wisconsin State Patrol discovered crack cocaine

in a fast-food container in a truck and a kilogram of powdered cocaine in plastic sandwich bags concealed inside the tailgate. According to the Milwaukee HIDTA, kilogram quantities of powdered cocaine seized from Mexican DTOs in 1999 had been placed in rubber balloons and then wrapped tightly with clear duct tape.

Distribution

As noted, Milwaukee is the focal point for wholesale cocaine distribution throughout Wisconsin because of its highway accessibility and ports offering easy access to the eastern part of the country as well as to Canada. Most law enforcement investigations outside the state that have a Wisconsin nexus involve Milwaukee, further suggesting that Milwaukee is a wholesale distribution point. Total drug-related arrests for 1999 totaled 2,400 for Milwaukee County, 9 percent more than for all other law enforcement agencies throughout the state—there were 2,200 drug-related arrests for all other agencies.

The Milwaukee DEA District Office, the Milwaukee HIDTA, the Wisconsin DNE, as well as law enforcement agencies responding to the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) National Drug Threat Survey 2000 report that Mexican DTOs are the predominant wholesale distributors of powdered cocaine in Wisconsin. Mexican wholesale suppliers not only maintain ties throughout Wisconsin but are associated with large-scale, sophisticated operations based in Chicago, such as the Herrera organization, and others based along the Southwest Border. Several 1999 Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigations uncovered large-scale Mexican DTOs distributing multikilogram quantities of cocaine throughout Wisconsin.

Dominican criminal groups are making inroads into the Wisconsin cocaine market. The Milwaukee HIDTA and the FBI Milwaukee Field Office state that local distributors have established ties to Dominican suppliers outside the state. Dominican criminal groups transport

cocaine into the area from the Southwest Border and Chicago. Dominican wholesalers and the Puerto Rican prison gang Ñeta have formed a partnership and, collectively, have become a major cocaine distribution network in Milwaukee. This network is sophisticated and poses a threat to the Milwaukee area because of its close ties to Colombian DTOs and to distributors operating from New York City and the Dominican Republic. Milwaukee law enforcement agencies report that the Dominican-Ñeta drug network in Milwaukee is modeled after the Washington Heights network in New York City. (Drug retail groups in New York City that have a surplus of labor will send workers to other cities to establish distribution networks and expand their market base. The parent groups in New York City manage the outlying networks, supplying them with drugs and labor.) A 1999 Southwest OCDETF investigation targeted a Dominican cocaine organization based in Houston, Texas. This organization had ties to transporters in Georgia, Kansas, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and Wisconsin as well as international connections to the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela.

The Ñeta is primarily a Puerto Rican prison gang that has its roots in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. Ñeta members can be found in many correctional facilities. An organized hierarchy, including a president and vice president, governs the Ñeta.

The Outlaws Motorcycle Club, one of the “Big Four” outlaw motorcycle gangs operating in the United States, deals mainly in cocaine. According to the Milwaukee HIDTA, Outlaws activity has increased in Wisconsin during the past 10 years and membership in the state has grown from one to seven chapters. The newest Outlaws chapter was located strategically in La Crosse to protect the Wisconsin border from encroachment by the Hells Angels. Through its Wisconsin chapters, the Outlaws Motorcycle Club has an extensive cocaine distribution network throughout the Milwaukee area. It maintains a large number of “associates” and “puppet clubs” that it uses to retail cocaine in the area. This network has been enhanced by the recent formation of a legitimate Wisconsin Motorcycle Club Federation, potentially giving Outlaws members a larger pool of motorcycle enthusiasts and clubs from which to recruit.

Associates are people who are known by club members but who have no standing within the club. Associates are allowed to hang around the clubhouse, attend parties and, at times, ride with the club on runs. They often are given odd jobs or tasks related to retail drug sales. Some associates are well-connected businesspersons whose businesses may assist the gang and its activities. Puppet clubs are smaller motorcycle clubs that exist within the sphere of influence of the major club. Members attend club meetings and wear a support patch identifying them with the major club. Puppet club members are used to accomplish menial tasks, perform guard duty, commit violent crimes, and sell drugs for the major club. This delegation of activities keeps the major club from getting “dirty.” Each Outlaws member is estimated to maintain at least 5 to 10 associates. Each chapter may maintain affiliations with as many as five puppet clubs. The Outlaws Motorcycle Club has approximately 60 chapters in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Europe; U.S. chapters comprise about 300 members.

In 1997, a federal grand jury in Milwaukee indicted 17 members of the Outlaws Motorcycle Club for operating an enterprise violating the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act. The defendants were charged with a pattern of racketeering activity that included murder, robbery, arson, narcotics trafficking, trafficking in stolen motor vehicles and vehicle parts, interstate transportation of stolen property, and counterfeiting. On October 16, 2000, 16 of the 17 members were convicted and received prison sentences ranging from 24 years to life.

The primary crack retail distributors in Wisconsin continue to be street gangs, such as the Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords, and Latin Kings. Jamaican posses, loosely structured Jamaican criminal groups, also retail crack in Wisconsin. Some of the street gangs that distribute crack cocaine also distribute powdered cocaine. In 1999, 31 percent of area drug enforcement agencies reported that gangs were an escalating problem and that there was a link between gangs and crack retail distribution. Between 1997 and 1999, major drug violations by the Gangster Disciples and the Vice Lords resulted in federal indictments for crack distribution.

Gang-controlled retail crack distribution is concentrated in southeastern Wisconsin, predominantly in the Milwaukee area, but is spreading throughout the state. Most Wisconsin respondents to the NDIC National Gang Survey 2000 indicated that street gangs are the primary retail crack distribution groups in the state. The survey responses provided by these cities indicate the extent to which major Chicago-based street gangs exercise control over retail crack distribution throughout Wisconsin. Law enforcement officials in Appleton, Fitchburg, Fond du Lac, Green Bay, Kenosha, and Wausau reported that the Gangster Disciples distributes cocaine locally in their cities. Fitchburg and Kenosha law enforcement authorities reported that the Vice Lords sells crack cocaine in their cities. Fond du Lac, Kenosha, Madison, and Milwaukee County law enforcement officials reported the presence of the Latin Kings throughout their areas.

Because of the variety of gangs involved in the drug trade, retail crack cocaine distribution patterns vary by city throughout Wisconsin. The Milwaukee HIDTA reports that African American gangs such as the Gangster Disciples and Vice Lords operate on the North Side of the city while Hispanic gangs such as the Latin Kings, Maniac Latin Disciples, and La Familia operate on the South Side. A La Crosse Police Department detective reported that the Gangster Disciples and Vice Lords are the primary crack cocaine retailers in the La Crosse area. They sell crack cocaine predominantly in the areas of Southwest and West Avenues, primarily in residential neighborhoods. The Dane County Narcotics Task Force reports that the Gangster Disciples and Black P-Stones are the primary crack cocaine retailers in Madison. The Gangster Disciples reportedly sells crack cocaine in low-income areas throughout the city such as in the Allied Drive, Lake Point Drive, Cyprus and Magnolia, and Fisher Baird neighborhoods. The P-Stones gang sells crack cocaine primarily in suburban areas and is more sophisticated than most of the gangs operating in Dane County. The P-Stones primarily uses cellular telephones to support its drug business.

The Black P-Stones is a major Chicago-based gang. Members started operations on the South Side of Chicago in the 1960s. This group has evolved from the archetypal street gang—where violence for the sake of violence is the norm—to a highly organized and sophisticated group whose structure mirrors that of organized crime families.

Law enforcement authorities report that independent African American dealers are the primary crack cocaine retailers in Appleton, Oshkosh, Racine, and Wausau. These dealers sell crack cocaine in primarily low-income housing areas throughout those cities. In Wausau, dealers have connections to Chicago-based gangs and reportedly sell most of their crack cocaine in a 2-mile-square area in the downtown district. Other crack retail areas are located in low-income rental areas on the north and south sides of the city.

Dominican wholesale distributors operating in Milwaukee use Hispanic gangs to expand further into the retail cocaine market. The Dominican–Ñeta drug network sells to several gangs on the South Side of Milwaukee including the Latin Kings, La Familia, Spanish Cobras, Maniac Latin Disciples, and Eastside Mafioso. La Familia members distribute cocaine in Milwaukee. La Familia is considered a major threat because of the large quantities of drugs that its members distribute in Milwaukee and because of its involvement in violent crime. Members of the Spanish Cobras are predominantly Puerto Rican and were originally members of the Maniac Latin Disciples. They are involved in the sale of crack cocaine as well as batteries, assaults, thefts, weapons violations, robberies, and burglaries. The Maniac Latin Disciples is a major Puerto Rican street gang with 60 to 80 members in Milwaukee and the surrounding suburbs. It is considered a major threat because of its connection to the Chicago Maniac Latin Disciples, the large quantities of crack it sells in Milwaukee, its involvement in violent crime, and its use of firearms in drug trafficking. The Eastside Mafioso (East Side Gangsters) is a violent gang that also has been known to obtain cocaine from Tennessee and Texas.

Marijuana

Marijuana remains the most readily available and most widely abused drug in Wisconsin. Abuse by young people has increased since the early 1990s. A Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WDPI) Student Survey shows that monthly marijuana use doubled between 1993 and 1997 and that lifetime use rose substantially.

Milwaukee and Madison are both major destinations for Mexican-produced marijuana and transshipment points to other areas in the state, and Mexican DTOs transport multikilogram quantities of marijuana from the Southwest Border to Wisconsin. Rural areas in Wisconsin provide many opportunities for cannabis cultivation.

Abuse

Marijuana abuse spans a wide spectrum of age, racial, and socioeconomic groups. TEDS data show a 134 percent increase in admissions for marijuana abuse from 1993 (723) to 1998 (1,699). According to the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance, most Wisconsin arrestees test positive for marijuana, and at least 60 percent of prison inmates test positive for marijuana when entering state correctional facilities. Juvenile

marijuana use has increased in recent years, according to arrest records and surveys conducted by the WDPI and the Wisconsin DNE. The Wisconsin DNE further reports that one-fourth of all marijuana users also abuse other drugs. According to the WDPI, the percentage of students who reported marijuana use in the previous 30 days doubled from 1993 (11%) to 1999 (22%).

Availability

Marijuana is more readily available in Wisconsin today than at any other time. Every county sheriff's office and police department in Wisconsin that replied to the NDIC National Drug Threat Survey 2000 reports the ready availability of marijuana; 40 percent report that availability has increased. According to the Wisconsin DNE, seven Wisconsin counties reported that marijuana was an increasing problem in 1999. Retail prices for marijuana dropped between 1996 and 1999 from \$175 to \$110 per ounce, also indicating an increasing marijuana supply.

Additional evidence that marijuana abuse has increased in Wisconsin is found in arrest and seizure statistics. Marijuana arrests made by Wisconsin County Drug Task Forces statewide increased from 4,556 in 1994 to 7,100 in 1999 (the Wisconsin Department of Justice Assistance reports the 1999 figures are only an estimate because of database problems). Furthermore, in a comparison of Wisconsin Task Force drug charges from 1995 to 1999, marijuana charges rose by more than 30 percent. According to Wisconsin DNE arrest records, approximately 68 percent of all arrests in some way involved marijuana. Seizures at the General Mitchell International Airport increased from 9 kilograms in 1997 to 230 kilograms in 1999.

State Crime Laboratory cases involving marijuana also increased from 1991 to 1999, from 1,000 to over 2,400. The numbers of seized drug samples submitted to the state crime laboratories for testing are indicators of the supply of drugs around the state.

Local marijuana availability is increasing because of advances in both indoor and outdoor growing techniques and because domestic marijuana is being cut with Mexican-produced marijuana to extend the supply through the year. Wisconsin rural areas provide many opportunities for cannabis cultivation, and there has been an increase in indoor grow operations. State law enforcement officials and seven county sheriffs stated that indoor grow operations were on the rise, and the number of plants seized in indoor grow operations statewide increased, from 2,979 in 1997 to 3,858 in 1999. Indoor grows produce marijuana with a much higher THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) content, increasing the drug's potency and desirability.

Violence

Violence associated with cannabis cultivation is of increasing concern to Wisconsin law enforcement officers. Domestic cannabis growers often are heavily armed and use boobytraps and warning devices to protect cultivation sites from law enforcement authorities and the public. The U.S. Forest Service reports that visitors to public lands may be endangered by the presence of cannabis cultivation sites, which are routinely boobytrapped with explosives, trip-wire firing devices, hanging fishhooks, and punji stakes buried around the cannabis plots. Furthermore, the number of weapons seized during cannabis eradication operations nationally has more than doubled over the past decade.

The Wisconsin Cannabis Enforcement and Suppression Effort (CEASE) has linked weapons use and cannabis cultivation. Hundreds of firearms have been seized during program operations. CEASE assists local law enforcement

agencies with locating marijuana grow operations and arresting and prosecuting responsible parties. The decrease shown for 1998 is probably due to a decrease in eradication efforts. (See Table 2.)

According to the Milwaukee HIDTA and the Wisconsin DNE, there is a potential for increased violence among Mexican DTOs, the Outlaws Motorcycle Club, Jamaican criminal groups, and street gangs competing for the marijuana distribution market. Mexican DTOs control marijuana transportation and wholesale distribution operations in Wisconsin, and they facilitate retail sales. The Outlaws Motorcycle Club and street gangs with local and statewide influence control marijuana retail sales. If the Outlaws, Jamaican criminal groups, or street gangs such as the East Side Mafioso or Spanish Cobras attempt to increase their retail sales or break into the wholesale marijuana market, violence most likely will erupt.

Table 2. CEASE Statistics, Wisconsin, 1993–1998

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Total Arrests	409	404	411	428	397	257
Total Weapons Seized	142	276	147	255	190	72
Firearms	116	234	131	184	184	64
Boobytraps	26	42	16	41	6	8

Source: Wisconsin Cannabis Enforcement and Suppression Effort, 1998.

Production

Marijuana production is increasing in Wisconsin. Most of the Wisconsin respondents to the National Drug Threat Survey 2000 indicated an increase in cannabis cultivation in their areas. A rise in task force investigations and arrests also suggests an increase in cultivation, while declining retail prices for marijuana indicate an increasing supply. Although outdoor cannabis

operations are strictly seasonal, Wisconsin's large rural areas provide abundant opportunity for cannabis cultivation. This domestically produced marijuana supplements supplies of Mexican-produced marijuana. Dealers sometimes cut domestic marijuana with the Mexican variety to increase profits and availability.

Local groups, as well as at least one interstate group, cultivate cannabis in Wisconsin rural areas in order to circumvent law enforcement scrutiny. The Corn Bread Mafia, a group that originated in a rural central Kentucky county and was composed of Caucasian farmers, was named by federal authorities as the first organized group in the United States involved in a multistate domestic cannabis cultivation and distribution network. This group shifted its growing operations to other states in the Midwest because of intensified marijuana suppression efforts within Kentucky. Members of the Corn Bread Mafia have cultivated cannabis on 30 farms in eight states including Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, and Wisconsin.

Indoor cannabis grows are becoming more widespread in Wisconsin. Improved growing techniques (easily obtained on the Internet or in magazines), a year-round growing season, and increased profits from selling high potency marijuana are triggering a rise in the number of indoor cannabis grows throughout Wisconsin. Refined techniques can produce marijuana with THC levels well above 10 percent, increasing the popularity of the product. Indoor cannabis grows

account for approximately 20 percent of the state's domestic marijuana supply. Seizures of plants grown indoors numbered 3,858 in 1999, an increase of more than 30 percent from 1997, and seizures again increased markedly in the first quarter of 2000. Most of the Wisconsin county sheriffs that responded to the NDIC National Drug Threat Survey 2000 reported increases in indoor grow operations. The Northwest Area Crime Unit, an antidrug task force that serves seven counties in northern Wisconsin, had considerable success in exposing outdoor cannabis growing operations in the early to mid-1990s, but arrests have decreased considerably since 1997. Like many other Wisconsin task forces, the crime unit attributes much of the decline in arrests to a state-wide trend toward indoor grows, which likely is a result of successful outdoor eradication efforts.

In March 2000, a Milwaukee City Council candidate was arrested for growing marijuana in his basement. Agents seized 250 plants worth a half million dollars as well as marijuana-growing apparatus. The plants ranged in height from 6 inches to 7 feet.

Source: *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 11 March 2000.

Transportation

The Milwaukee HIDTA and the Wisconsin DNE indicate that Mexican DTOs are the primary transporters of marijuana into and throughout Wisconsin. The Milwaukee, Sheboygan, and Madison Police Departments indicate that Mexican DTOs are the primary marijuana transporters in their jurisdictions. Twenty OCDETF investigations initiated nationwide in 1999 targeted major marijuana trafficking organizations from the Southwest Border to Chicago—a distribution center that influences the drug trade in the Milwaukee area. Most of the marijuana available in Wisconsin is transported from Mexico via the Southwest Border. Law enforcement and intelligence sources report that Texas and Arizona are the primary entry points for Mexican marijuana smuggled

into the United States. The FBI arrested two individuals for operating a marijuana transportation network from south Texas. One member of the network was arrested in transit to Milwaukee with 135 kilograms of marijuana. According to the Dallas DEA Field Division, 100-pound quantities of imported Mexican-produced marijuana are transshipped through the Dallas Field Division area of operations to areas in the northern and eastern United States.

Marijuana is transported to the area in bulk shipments, frequently hidden in private vehicles, tractor-trailers, and utility trucks. For example, the Texas Department of Public Safety seized a large amount of marijuana from a tractor-trailer that was loaded in El Paso and destined for

Milwaukee. Marijuana transported in tractor-trailers often is mixed with the truck's legitimate cargo; in some cases, the marijuana is the only cargo. In February 2001, authorities in Phelps County, Missouri, seized 3,689 pounds of marijuana from a tractor-trailer driven by a Wisconsin man. Stopped for running a stop sign, the driver told the officer he was transporting produce. The officer became suspicious, however, after noticing the refrigeration unit on the vehicle was turned off. The marijuana, with an estimated street value of \$11 million, was found hidden in 55-gallon barrels in the front of the trailer.

A Mexican DTO was responsible for delivering large quantities of marijuana to Wisconsin. The DTO smuggled marijuana into the United States, primarily through Laredo, Texas. Members of the organization frequently traveled from Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, to the United States to negotiate the sale of marijuana for buyers in Austin, Dallas, and Houston.

Source: FBI El Paso Field Office, 1998.

Marijuana also is transported into the area through parcel delivery services. On February 17, 2000, law enforcement officers seized approximately 60 kilograms of marijuana from four parcel packages shipped from El Paso to Milwaukee and to three cities on the East Coast. The heavily taped parcels with handwritten labels had been shipped overnight from various El Paso postal drops. In another instance, a Harlingen, Texas, Special Investigation Unit investigated a marijuana trafficking group that used various parcel companies to transport marijuana from the South-

west Border of the United States. When agents raided the traffickers' residence, they found dozens of package receipts indicating that the group had mailed at least 96 packages weighing more than 1,575 kilograms from 1997 to 1999. The packages were shipped via parcel services from Harlingen to recipients in Wisconsin and 14 other states. Another investigation identified a major marijuana transportation organization that used various parcel companies to transport marijuana to numerous states, including Wisconsin.

Jamaican criminal groups also transport large quantities of marijuana to Wisconsin, primarily to Milwaukee. For example, two Jamaican men were arrested in Illinois after more than 270 kilograms of marijuana were discovered in a tractor-trailer on Interstate 55 headed for Wisconsin. The police found the marijuana in 14 cardboard boxes that were surrounded by boxes of onions. Jamaican criminal groups have contacts throughout the United States, the Caribbean, and Europe, and the Milwaukee HIDTA reports that these contacts support transportation operations into Wisconsin.

The Herrera organization transports large shipments of marijuana across the U.S.–Mexico border, predominantly via tractor-trailer. The drugs are stored at transshipment areas in the United States until they can be transported to major cities. The Herrera organization ships multiton quantities of marijuana to Chicago, which serves as a transshipment point for distribution of marijuana to Kansas City, Missouri; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Distribution

Mexican DTOs are the primary marijuana wholesalers in Wisconsin. They also supply most of the cocaine in the Milwaukee area and use the same networks to distribute marijuana. Family members and associates provide the connections through which DTOs in Mexico establish branches of their organizations in the United States.

Mexican distribution groups operating in the Milwaukee area often are composed of extended family members and associates of Mexican DTOs. Mexican DTOs also have strong affiliations with Milwaukee street gangs and supply them with marijuana for retail distribution.

Various criminal groups and street gangs are secondary wholesale distributors. In 1999, Jamaican criminal groups transported several hundred kilograms of marijuana from California to supply their wholesale and retail marijuana distribution operations in Milwaukee. African American gangs on the North Side of Milwaukee transport large amounts of marijuana, predominantly from Chicago, and distribute it to other retail groups. The East Side Mafioso sells large and small quantities of marijuana and other drugs to other gangs. However, Milwaukee gangs are involved in primarily retail marijuana sales.

Much of the marijuana the Herrera organization transports across the U.S.–Mexico border to Chicago is destined for Milwaukee and a portion is shipped directly to Milwaukee from the Southwest Border. Organization members facilitate distribution through businesses such as meat supply companies, supermarkets, farms, restaurants, lounges, and bars, where large shipments can be delivered without arousing suspicion. The marijuana, as well as other drugs, is then distributed at the wholesale level through local networks.

Once marijuana is shipped into Milwaukee, which serves as a distribution center for the rest of the state, it is stored in private storage or warehouse facilities. The marijuana is then transferred to private homes and garages on an as-needed basis. Kilogram quantities of marijuana seized from Mexican DTOs often are packaged in large plastic bags wrapped in tape; smaller plastic sandwich bags are used for retail distribution quantities.

While street gangs retail a significant amount of marijuana in the state, ethnic criminal groups also distribute marijuana at the street level within their communities. Retail sales take place on street corners, from vehicles, in drug houses, in bars, and in other public places. African American gangs work two levels of retail marijuana distribution: sales to consumers and sales to other retailers. Sales to consumers consist of selling \$10 and \$20 worth of marijuana from houses and on street corners. Sales to other retailers involve larger quantities of marijuana. The East Side

Mafioso's current method of operation is to sell large and small quantities of marijuana to other gangs. The gang has obtained marijuana from Tennessee and Texas and transported it to Milwaukee. The Mickey Cobras gang deals strictly in retail sales and receives its marijuana supply from various sources in Milwaukee and Chicago. The Mexican Posse, a Mexican street gang operating on the South Side of Milwaukee, is involved in retail marijuana sales and is very violent. Within the Milwaukee area, Jamaican criminal groups primarily deal on the North Side and are associated with several Jamaican-owned taverns in the city.

The Outlaws Motorcycle Club, detailed in the Cocaine section, also is involved in retail marijuana distribution. The Milwaukee HIDTA stated that the Outlaws Motorcycle Club is dealing marijuana throughout the state. The Outlaws club is known to distribute drugs through business fronts such as exotic bars and tattoo parlors. The Outlaws' Milwaukee chapter, the largest of the five Outlaws chapters in the state, controls all Outlaws activity in the state. The Milwaukee chapter attained its position through violent suppression of other clubs in the 1970s and 1980s. It consists of older, more hardened members, and it uses puppet clubs to retail marijuana and other drugs in the Milwaukee area.

Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine production and abuse are expanding from Minnesota and Iowa into primarily rural counties in western Wisconsin. Methamphetamine is growing in popularity because it is less expensive and has a longer euphoric effect than crack cocaine. Mexican DTOs transport the bulk of the methamphetamine available in Wisconsin from

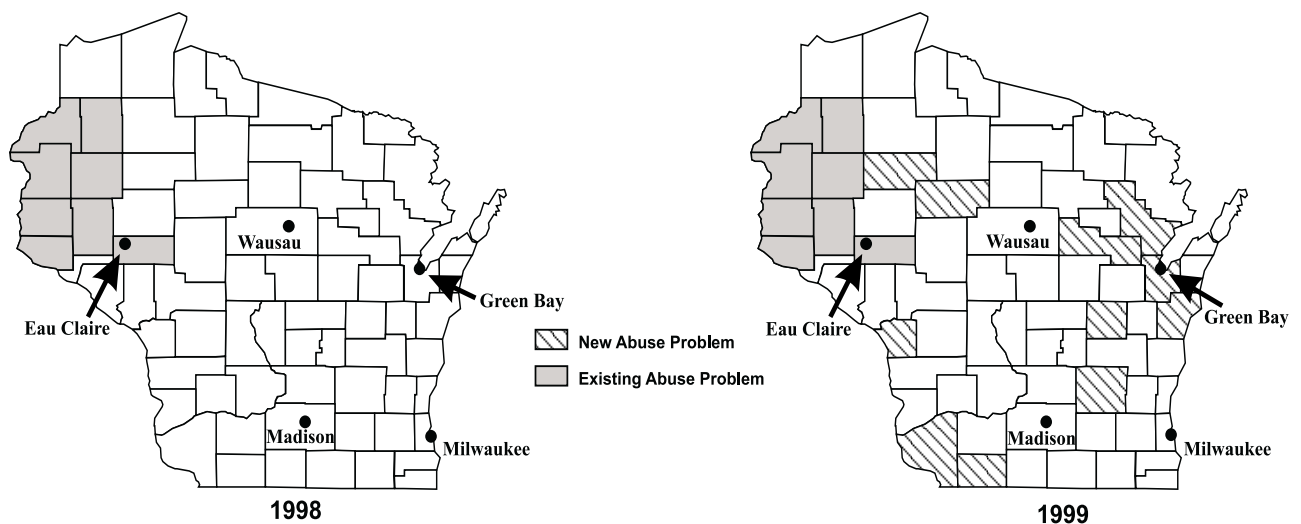
California and other Southwest Border states. However, methamphetamine laboratory seizures are increasing at a substantial rate, an indicator that local production is also increasing. Methamphetamine production is causing serious safety and environmental concerns in Wisconsin.

Abuse

Methamphetamine abuse is most prevalent in western Wisconsin, but it is beginning to spread throughout the state. Iowa and Minnesota law enforcement officials note that methamphetamine production, sales, and abuse have been at high levels, and due to investigative efforts in those states, methamphetamine transporters are moving into Wisconsin. Methamphetamine abuse has spread from northwestern Wisconsin to southern and eastern Wisconsin. Eleven additional counties east and south of the initial problem area cited methamphetamine as a growing concern. (See Figure 1.)

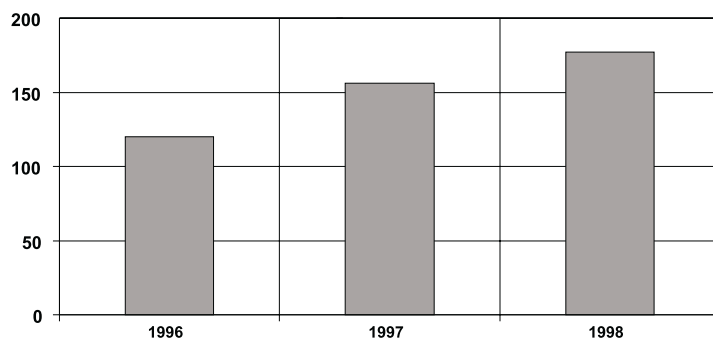
Other indications of increasing methamphetamine abuse in Wisconsin are emergency department mentions, which increased 47 percent, from 120 in 1996 to 177 in 1998 (see Chart 3 on page 18), and TEDS admissions for methamphetamine abuse, which increased from 38 in 1993 to 68 in 1998. The U.S. Attorney for the Western District indicates that western counties are experiencing increases in treatment admissions for methamphetamine abuse. Typical users in Wisconsin are Caucasian males and females between the ages of 20 and 30. The Eau Claire DNE Regional Director reported that youth between the ages of 12 and 15 were injecting methamphetamine instead of snorting or smoking the drug.

Figure 1. Methamphetamine Abuse Problem Areas, Wisconsin, 1998–1999



Source: Wisconsin Division of Narcotics Enforcement 1999 Report.

Chart 3. Methamphetamine Emergency Department Mentions, Wisconsin, 1996–1998



Source: Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services.

Availability

The availability of methamphetamine in Wisconsin increased in 1999, but then stabilized during 2000. The DEA and Wisconsin DNE both state that the availability of Mexican methamphetamine stabilized in 2000; however, the DEA maintains that methamphetamine is still an investigatory priority throughout the state. Most methamphetamine distributed throughout Wisconsin is produced in high-volume laboratories in Mexico and in the United States, mainly in California. The FBI estimates that between 10 and 20 methamphetamine distribution organizations with ties to California and Mexico routinely transport and distribute kilogram quantities of methamphetamine from laboratories in California to states as far east as North Carolina and as far north as Wisconsin.

Domestic methamphetamine availability and production are rapidly increasing in Wisconsin. According to the DEA Milwaukee District Office, methamphetamine availability is increasing especially in the Western District. Cookers and dealers are relocating from Iowa and Minnesota—states

that have experienced significant increases in methamphetamine production and sales since 1995—to new market environments such as Wisconsin. Suggestive of an increase in methamphetamine production and availability is the decline in retail prices in Wisconsin from 1996 to 1999. Prices dropped from \$115 to \$105 per gram.

Methamphetamine arrests and seizures in Wisconsin are on the rise, indicating an increase in methamphetamine availability. The Wisconsin DNE seized 26 methamphetamine laboratories in the first 9 months of 2000, and the number of Wisconsin Drug Task Force methamphetamine investigations more than doubled from 1994 to 1999. The West Central Drug Task Force, Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office, and Janesville Police Department stated that the number of methamphetamine investigations, arrests, and seizures increased in 1999. The Janesville Police Department seized its first two laboratories in 1999. The number of State Crime Laboratory cases steadily increased from 16 in 1991 to 101 in 1999.

Violence

The potential for violence associated with methamphetamine is a significant problem. Methamphetamine abusers tend to be violent and can endanger themselves and those around them. As methamphetamine’s euphoric effects begin to

diminish, abusers enter a stage called “tweaking” in which they are prone to violence, delusions, and paranoia. Many abusers try to buffer the effect of the methamphetamine “crash” with other drugs such as cocaine or heroin. These effects, in combination

with severe sleep deprivation, can result in a very unpredictable, uncontrollable individual.

Methamphetamine abuse is the cause of much of the drug-related violence throughout western Wisconsin. According to the Wisconsin DNE, violent methamphetamine abusers are affecting rural and suburban communities. An increase in methamphetamine abuse in western Wisconsin is linked to significant increases in domestic violence and child abuse and neglect cases. Documented cases of child neglect indicate that users often leave children unattended while they seek the drug. One northern county reported a 100 percent increase

in domestic violence cases in a 1-year period (1998), a situation which the U.S. Attorney for the Western District and law enforcement officials attribute to a rise in methamphetamine abuse.

Methamphetamine is a synthetic stimulant that affects the central nervous system, causing body functions to accelerate. Some short-term effects of methamphetamine include hallucination, violent and aggressive behavior, and paranoia. Long-term effects include those mentioned as well as depression.

Production

Methamphetamine production is increasing in western Wisconsin. The Regional Director of the Eau Claire DNE reports that laboratory seizures and methamphetamine production have increased in 2000. The Lafayette County Sheriff reports an increase in methamphetamine laboratory activity, further stating that 10 abandoned methamphetamine laboratory sites were found and 3 working laboratories were seized in 1999, an increase from the previous year. Responses to a 1999 Wisconsin Department of Justice survey of local law enforcement agencies in seven southwestern counties show that 30 methamphetamine laboratories or waste sites were found in 1999, compared with just 2 the previous year. The U.S. Attorney for the Western District reports that approximately 10 percent of the methamphetamine consumed in the district is produced locally. The Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance reports that high school and college students are downloading methamphetamine recipes from the Internet, producing the drug, and selling it in their schools.

In 1998, two ethnic Russians were arrested in Oregon, Wisconsin, as suspects in the operation of a large methamphetamine laboratory.

Source: Wisconsin State Journal, 5 March 1998.

Methamphetamine production in Wisconsin is connected to other states in the region. In 1999, the Eau Claire DNE seized a laboratory that was established in a boathouse on the Mississippi River; the laboratory operators were from Minnesota. DNE officials indicate that methamphetamine producers, or cookers, from Arkansas came to Wisconsin to teach Wisconsin cookers how to produce methamphetamine. Out-of-state cookers who began production operations in an apartment in Madison, Wisconsin, operated another laboratory seized in 1999 by the Wisconsin DNE. The cookers were arrested, jumped bond, and were again apprehended operating a mobile laboratory from a truck. In another instance, a temporary methamphetamine laboratory seized in 1999 in Milwaukee County was set up in a hotel room; the precursor chemicals found originated in Missouri.

Wisconsin's large national forests and wilderness areas are ideal for clandestine methamphetamine laboratory operations. Wisconsin operates 42 parks, 4 recreation areas, 10 state forests, 13 state trails, as well as 6 million acres of hunting land. The parks range in size from Devil's Lake, with 8,864 acres, to the largest single state recreational facility, the Northern Highland Legion Forest, with 221,946 acres. State trails total 8,928 acres. Limited law enforcement presence makes these areas ideally suited for operating

methamphetamine laboratories and disposing of the resulting toxic waste. Furthermore, Wisconsin's proximity to Canada gives local laboratory operators another advantage over law enforcement efforts. Precursors such as ephedrine, pseudo-ephedrine, and P2P (phenyl-2-propanone) are more readily available in Canada where prices are lower and regulations regarding these chemical precursors are less restrictive.

There are several methamphetamine production methods, but the "Nazi" method is the most popular in Wisconsin. Western Wisconsin is rural and home to hundreds of farms that store anhydrous ammonia, a key ingredient in the Nazi method, as fertilizer. The Wisconsin DNE states there have been increasing anhydrous ammonia thefts from farms and farm supply outlets. A Wisconsin State Representative stated that there have been frequent thefts of 1,000-gallon containers of anhydrous ammonia from farm fields in western Wisconsin. In February 2000, the Wisconsin State Legislature toughened penalties for stealing farm fertilizers used in methamphetamine production. The Walworth County Sheriff has urged farmers to be aware that methamphetamine production often requires agricultural chemicals and to keep locks on storage tanks. One indication that efforts to curb anhydrous ammonia theft may be working is a report by the Wisconsin DNE that the ephedrine reduction production method, which uses red phosphorus and ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, is becoming more prevalent. The Regional Director of the Eau Claire DNE reports that pseudoephedrine bulk purchases are increasing in the region.

The toxic and hazardous waste associated with any methamphetamine production method increases the threat to law enforcement, surrounding communities, and the environment. Wisconsin law enforcement officials indicate that methamphetamine laboratory operators are

pouring toxic waste into thermos bottles, coolers, and other containers and then dumping them into highway ditches. The Lafayette County Sheriff reported that several thermos bottles and water containers containing by-products were found along roads in that southwestern Wisconsin County. State officials report that waste dumped from backwoods laboratories into ditches poses a threat to road crews and volunteers gathering litter along highways. In February 2000, the Wisconsin State Legislature toughened penalties for dumping the hazardous waste associated with methamphetamine production.

DNE officials report that it takes significant time, physical effort, and money to clean a dumpsite. Remediation costs are between \$3,000 and \$10,000 per site. The Regional Director of the Eau Claire DNE reports that money for laboratory cleanup is nonexistent, forcing the DNE to coordinate with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to continue laboratory cleanup. The Regional Director also reports a significant increase in the number and size of toxic dumps in southwestern Wisconsin.

Methamphetamine Production Methods

Nazi Method: Primary chemicals are sodium or lithium metal and ephedrine; a key ingredient is anhydrous ammonia. This method normally produces up to ounce quantities of high-quality methamphetamine. Independent Caucasian methamphetamine cookers frequently use this method.

Ephedrine Reduction Method (also known as the "Mexican" or "red phosphorus" method): Primary chemicals associated with this method are ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, hydriodic acid, and red phosphorus. The method is normally used by Mexican organizations or cookers trained by Mexicans to produce large amounts of d-methamphetamine.

Transportation

Mexican DTOs dominate methamphetamine transportation operations in Wisconsin. The Wis-

consin DNE reports that most methamphetamine in the state comes from laboratory operators

along the Southwest Border and is distributed throughout Wisconsin by Mexican DTOs. For example, a cooperating individual stated that he traveled to San Diego, California, to purchase methamphetamine. The methamphetamine was smuggled into San Diego from laboratories in Mexico. The cooperating individual transported the methamphetamine back to Milwaukee. In 1999, a DEA investigation centered on a member of a Mexican methamphetamine trafficking organization based in Fresno, California. The organization was responsible for transporting methamphetamine in quantities up to 25 kilograms to Wisconsin and three other states.

Mexican DTOs control most methamphetamine laboratories throughout Mexico, California, and Texas, the principal methamphetamine source areas for Wisconsin, and they transport methamphetamine throughout the Great Lakes Region. Known transshipment points in the Midwest include Chicago, Illinois; Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota; Des Moines, Iowa; Omaha, Nebraska; and Kansas City, Missouri. The FBI estimates that between 10 and 20 Mexican DTOs with ties to California and Mexico routinely transport and distribute kilogram quantities of methamphetamine from laboratories in California

Distribution

Mexican DTOs are the predominant methamphetamine wholesalers in Wisconsin. The Milwaukee HIDTA and Wisconsin DNE state that Mexican DTOs distribute cocaine and marijuana in Wisconsin and use the same drug distribution networks to facilitate wholesale methamphetamine distribution. Mexican DTOs also infiltrate Hispanic communities located around poultry and meat packing plants as well as farming communities to help facilitate distribution throughout the Midwest and possibly in Wisconsin. The communities surrounding these plants and farming communities are attractive to trafficking organizations because members can blend in with the growing Hispanic population. One

to states as far east as North Carolina and as far north as Wisconsin. In 1999, the Wisconsin DNE investigated a husband and wife distributing methamphetamine from Superior, Wisconsin. The couple received approximately 4,000 grams of methamphetamine from Texas through postal services. The Regional Director of the Eau Claire DNE reports that a significant amount of methamphetamine is produced in Minnesota and transported to Wisconsin by Caucasian males.

Transporters primarily use private vehicles to transport methamphetamine into the state. For example, a detective with the Central Area Drug Enforcement Group reported a methamphetamine seizure from a private vehicle traveling from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Wausau, Wisconsin, in early 2000, and in Marshfield, Wisconsin, authorities seized 20 ounces of methamphetamine concealed in a private vehicle. Utility trucks, tractor-trailers, parcel services, and airlines are secondary transportation methods. In 1999, a female alleged drug courier from Los Angeles was arrested at the General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee. Agents discovered 1 kilogram of “peanut butter meth” (so called because its consistency and appearance are similar to that of peanut butter) held around her waist by a girdle.

method of operation is for illegal aliens, some of whom are migrant workers, to transport the drugs to the United States. If arrested, they return to Mexico, obtain new identities, and begin the process again.

Methamphetamine transportation organizations started their operations along the Southwest Border and have moved through the Rocky Mountain states to the Midwest, largely following Hispanic migrant workers at farms and poultry and meat packing plants. Law enforcement officials in Des Moines suggest that the upsurge in methamphetamine in their jurisdiction might be related to the increasing number of legitimate Mexican workers working at meat packing plants.

A spokesperson for the DEA in St. Louis stated that methamphetamine traffickers are following the eastern migration trend of Hispanics working on farms and in meat packing plants in the Midwest. The spokesperson further commented that “the Mexican drug traffickers are coming to those areas where there is a legitimate Mexican community, and they’re blending in and distributing their methamphetamine that way.”

Source: The Press Enterprise Company, 23 January 2000.

The DEA also links the increasing availability of methamphetamine in the Midwest to a concurrent rise in the presence of migrant workers, some of whom may be used by Mexican DTOs to facilitate distribution. The DEA indicates that methamphetamine distributors in South Dakota are infiltrating the Hispanic population surrounding meat packing plants. The DEA also confirms that methamphetamine availability is increasing in Marshalltown, Iowa—the site of a large meat packing plant only 140 miles from the Wisconsin border.

Wisconsin is facing a methamphetamine threat from traffickers moving to the state from Iowa and Minnesota that may parallel the methamphetamine problem plaguing the Midwest. There are

large and midsize poultry and meat packing plants throughout Wisconsin. The state also has a large migrant farm worker population. Early indications show that the movement of methamphetamine into Wisconsin via the Hispanic worker populations at poultry and meat packing plants may already have occurred. For example, the city of Green Bay, home to a poultry packing plant employing a large number of Hispanics, reports an increase in methamphetamine trafficking.

While Mexican criminal groups likely use migrant workers and existing distribution networks to distribute methamphetamine at the retail level, no single group dominates methamphetamine retail operations. According to the Regional Director of the Eau Claire DNE, methamphetamine retailers are predominantly middle- to lower-class Caucasian males between the ages of 20 and 30. They operate primarily in rural areas and typically have no gang affiliation. Some methamphetamine cooks travel to Wisconsin from other states such as Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri to sell their product. Small, independent operations usually produce enough methamphetamine for personal consumption, although operations in predominantly rural areas may produce enough methamphetamine for broader local consumption.

Heroin

The increasing availability and abuse of Southeast Asian (SEA) and South American (SA) heroin are growing problems, particularly in the Milwaukee area. Milwaukee is a major destination for heroin in the state and a transshipment point for various types of heroin destined for other Wisconsin cities. Nigerian and Dominican heroin transporters primarily use privately owned vehicles to transport heroin into the state. Commercial aircraft, buses, and package services are secondary methods. Most retail heroin sales are dominated by African American and Hispanic street gangs such as the East Side Mafioso, Mickey Cobras, Vice Lords, Maniac Latin Disciples, and Latin Kings.

The Mickey Cobras is a Chicago-based African American gang also known as the Cobras-stones. This gang is very mobile, and factions of the gang are being established throughout the Midwest. The gang’s criminal expertise is in narcotics. It protects its operations through drive-by shootings and other assaults.

Abuse

Heroin abuse is increasing in Wisconsin. Although the Wisconsin DNE reports that few drug units cite heroin as an increasing problem, the Wisconsin Department of Justice predicts that heroin will become more prevalent and its availability may expand to new areas throughout the state. Most heroin abuse is concentrated in the Milwaukee and Racine areas; however, in a 2000 DNE report, 15 percent of Wisconsin counties reported heroin as an increasing problem.

Approximately three-fourths of all reported heroin-related deaths in Wisconsin in 1999 occurred in Milwaukee. A 2000 report by the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's office shows a record number of deaths were attributed to heroin abuse in the county in 2000—a 75 percent increase from 1999. (See Chart 4.) Heroin deaths continue to rise in other areas of the state. A Dane County Narcotics Task Force detective reports that the number of heroin overdose deaths in Dane County as of September 2000 more than doubled 1999 figures.

Heroin overdoses led to the deaths of eight people in Milwaukee County during a 2-week period in 2000, according to the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office.

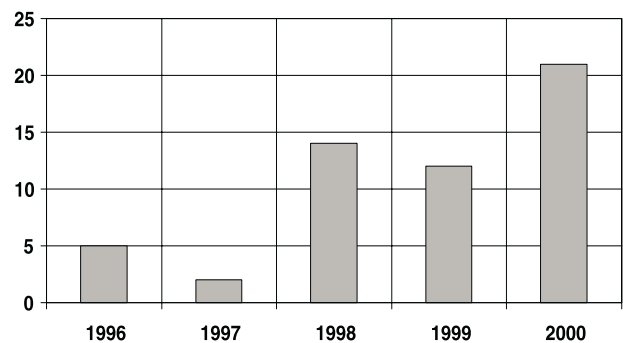
Heroin purity levels, some measured as high as 95 percent, are higher than ever before. Higher purity heroin gives users the option of effectively snorting or smoking the drug rather than injecting—

an option that enhances the appeal to younger users and those who previously may have been hesitant to use the drug.

The Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office reports that the 15 people who died of heroin overdoses in the first 8 months of 2000 were mostly middle-aged, suggesting that they may have been longtime users conditioned to lower purity heroin.

Rising purity levels have led to an increased demand for heroin, which in turn has led to an increasing number of heroin users in the state. One Milwaukee inner-city hospital estimates that approximately one-third of its pregnant patients test positive for drugs. Of these patients, those most often testing positive for heroin are Caucasian.

Chart 4. Heroin-Related Deaths, Milwaukee County, 1996–2000



Source: Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office.

Availability

Heroin is becoming more readily available in the Milwaukee and Madison areas. The Milwaukee HIDTA and the DEA Milwaukee District Office report that SEA heroin is the prevailing type available, followed by South American (SA) heroin. Primarily, Nigerian criminal groups distribute wholesale amounts of SEA heroin, while Dominican criminal groups dominate the SA heroin trade.

An indication that heroin is more readily available not only in Milwaukee, but also in the rest of the state, is an increase in seizures and heroin-related investigations. The Dane County Narcotics Task Force reports that heroin is increasingly available in its jurisdiction. For example, nearly 100 “bindles” of heroin were recovered in two separate drug busts in Madison

and Fitchburg. In a 1995 to 1999 comparison of Wisconsin Task Force drug investigations by drug type, heroin investigations rose 60 percent. The number of State Crime Laboratory cases involving heroin increased 130 percent from 1995 to 1998. Most heroin seized in Milwaukee has been packaged in quantities of 1 gram or less.

White heroin refers to any heroin that is white, off-white, or tan in color. Many law enforcement agencies do not have the capability to distinguish the origin of the heroin.

Heroin purity levels are increasing in the Milwaukee area. In 1997, the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory tested 39 samples, and most purity levels were between 20 and 30 percent. Two samples tested at 80 percent purity. Some samples of white heroin purchased in Milwaukee during Wisconsin DNE undercover buys in 1999 and 2000 tested at 80 percent purity. Although lower purity levels were still the norm, more samples tested at 80 percent or greater in 1999 than in 1997.

Violence

Most federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Wisconsin cite the violent crime associated with gang-related drug trafficking activity as the most serious criminal threat to the state. Gangs are the primary street-level distributors of heroin and other drugs in Wisconsin. Gang migration from Milwaukee to other areas of the state has increased the availability of drugs and consequently the associated violent criminal activity in these areas.

There are no indications of significant increases in crime or violence related directly to heroin use in Wisconsin. Nonetheless, the highly addictive nature of heroin forces many users to resort to crime to obtain the drug. Heroin users often commit theft and burglary and occasionally engage in prostitution in order to feed their addiction.

Production

There is no evidence to suggest that opium poppy cultivation or heroin production takes place in Wisconsin.

Transportation

Nigerian and Dominican criminal organizations are the primary heroin transporters in Wisconsin. Nigerian criminal organizations obtain the bulk of their heroin supply from Chicago and Dominican organizations receive their supply from New York City. Nigerian criminal organizations are based in Milwaukee and deal directly with Nigerian and/or Southeast Asian suppliers as well as with Nigerian sources in Chicago. Nigerian criminal organizations

are the primary source of SEA heroin in Wisconsin. A 1998 multiagency investigation, Operation Global Sea, targeted a Nigerian heroin smuggling organization that stretched from Asia, to Nigeria, to the Milwaukee-Chicago area, and throughout the United States. The organization used couriers, primarily Caucasian females who ingested condoms filled with heroin, to smuggle the drug into the United States. The organization also transported

heroin in hidden compartments in suitcases and used commercial airline pilots to smuggle heroin from London, England, to the United States.

Nigerian criminal organizations have become increasingly sophisticated, controlling courier networks capable of transporting multiple kilograms of heroin from Southeast Asia to both U.S. and European distribution markets. In 1999, the FBI investigated a Nigerian heroin criminal group based in Fayetteville, Georgia, that used Nigerian and U.S. citizens to smuggle heroin from Bangkok, Thailand, to Milwaukee and three other U.S. cities.

Dominican and Asian criminal groups are beginning to influence the Milwaukee heroin market. Dominican criminal groups operating in the Milwaukee area are bringing in high-purity SA heroin. At the same time, highly sophisticated Asian criminal groups in the area have expanded their drug transportation activities. Their connections with other Asian criminal groups across the United States, Canada, and

overseas have increased the flow of SEA heroin into northern Wisconsin.

Heroin transportation groups use numerous methods to ship heroin into Wisconsin. Transportation by private vehicles, trucks and, to a lesser extent, buses is the principal method. The East Side Mafioso uses cars outfitted with sophisticated traps, as well as buses, rental vehicles, and trains, to transport heroin from Chicago to Milwaukee. Other transportation modes used are airlines and mail services. For example, a DEA–U.S. Customs Service investigation involving undercover heroin buys revealed an intercepted call to a Chicago telephone number that was used by a Nigerian criminal group. The phone call instructed a New York-based courier to transport heroin to Milwaukee through General Mitchell International Airport. In another instance, a 1999 OCDETF investigation profiled a heroin trafficking organization that concealed heroin in lotion bottles and mailed them to Wisconsin.

Distribution

Nigerian criminal groups control most of the SEA heroin wholesale operations in Milwaukee. Nigerian wholesalers sell SEA heroin to Wisconsin street gangs who distribute it at the street level. Nigerian criminal groups reportedly supply 70 to 90 percent of the SEA heroin available in Chicago, northwestern Indiana, and southern Wisconsin. One such Nigerian criminal group distributed white heroin throughout Chicago and in states bordering Illinois such as Michigan, Indiana, and Wisconsin in 1999. Another Nigerian criminal group working in Chicago supplied heroin to Detroit and Milwaukee. A 1999 Milwaukee HIDTA investigation of a Nigerian criminal group based in Milwaukee disclosed that the group obtained its heroin supply from Chicago.

Dominican criminal groups are making inroads into the Milwaukee heroin market. The Milwaukee HIDTA reports that Dominican distribution groups are working closely with the

Dominican heroin retail groups based in New York City often will send workers to other cities to establish distribution networks and expand their market base. The parent groups in New York City manage these outlying networks and supply them with drugs and labor.

prison-based street gang Ñeta, and the Dominican-Ñeta network is becoming a major heroin supplier in Milwaukee. A 10-ounce seizure of SA heroin in 1999 may indicate an increase in the use of this type of heroin and suggests a growing Dominican influence. SA heroin is typically of high purity and generally is priced lower than other heroin sold in the area, making it highly marketable.

Milwaukee and Chicago-based street gangs primarily are responsible for street-level heroin distribution. Heroin retail distribution occurs most frequently in Milwaukee's inner-city areas,

although Asian criminal groups have increased heroin distribution in northern Wisconsin. The East Side Mafioso is a heroin retail distributor on Milwaukee's East Side. The gang transports the heroin from Chicago to Milwaukee. The Spanish Cobras gang retails heroin primarily on the North Side of Milwaukee and obtains its heroin supply predominantly from Nigerian criminal groups. The Maniac Latin Disciples gang in Milwaukee is linked to the Chicago Maniac Latin Disciples and reports to Chicago leaders. Members retail heroin throughout the city and suburbs and are considered a major drug threat because of their Chicago connections. Dominican criminal groups are using street gangs, principally through an association with Neta, to retail heroin. Recent reports indicate, however, that Dominican groups on the South Side of Milwaukee are using the Latin Kings, La Familia, Spanish Cobras, Maniac Latin Disciples, and Eastside Mafioso to distribute heroin.

Retail drug distribution takes place in different areas across the state. Police departments from smaller Wisconsin communities provided information in March 2000 pertaining to heroin retail areas. The Dane County Narcotics Task Force reported that heroin distribution occurs mostly in suburban areas of Madison and that the typical distributor is a Caucasian male working independently. A Central Area Drug Enforcement Group detective reported that heroin distribution and abuse are generally confined to the large Asian population in Wausau. A Racine County Metro Drug Unit detective reported that Chicago-based, African American gangs sell heroin predominantly on the South Side of Racine.

Milwaukee police officials indicate that 90 percent of the heroin they seize is white heroin and that seizures are predominantly of street-level amounts. Street-level quantities of heroin take the form of 1/4-, 1/2-, and 1-gram packs.

Other Dangerous Drugs

Other dangerous drugs such as MDMA, ketamine, and GHB are becoming increasingly popular in Wisconsin, particularly among young people in urban areas and college towns. Night-

clubs and rave parties are the primary retail distribution points for club drugs, although many of these drugs increasingly are being distributed outside these venues.

Abuse

“Club drugs” or “designer drugs” are general terms for synthetic drugs that have become popular with teenagers and young adults who frequent nightclubs and raves. These drugs include MDMA, ketamine, GHB, GBL, and LSD. The popularity of these drugs has increased in large part because of the perception that they are not harmful; however, many users experiment with an extremely dangerous combination of club drugs, other drugs, and alcohol.

Abuse of MDMA, LSD, and psilocybin mushrooms is on the rise in Wisconsin. National emergency department mentions show a sharp increase in the use of MDMA throughout the United States,

Raves are dance events that feature hard pounding techno-music and flashing laser lights. They often are promoted through flyers and advertisements distributed at clubs, in record shops and clothing stores, on college campuses, and over the Internet. Club owners and rave promoters often sell items that are associated with MDMA use. These include bottled water to prevent dehydration, pacifiers to prevent involuntary teeth clenching, and menthol nasal inhalers, chemical lights, and neon glow sticks, necklaces, and bracelets—all of which enhance the effects of MDMA.

Source: NDIC, *Joint Assessment of MDMA Trafficking Trends*, June 2000.

from over 400 in 1995 to over 1,000 in 1998. An increase in MDMA-related activity is just beginning in Wisconsin. March 2001 information indicates that three deaths in Wisconsin in the previous 6 months are attributed to MDMA. The Milwaukee Police Department conducted its first six MDMA investigations in the first quarter of 2000, and the Dane County Narcotics Task Force conducted its first four MDMA investigations in the first 8 months of 2000.

A woman attending a 4-day rave music festival near Black River Falls, Wisconsin, died of an MDMA overdose in September 2000. Two men also attending the event were injured, one of whom suffered severe burns after dancing in a bonfire.

Source: *Associated Press*, Eau Claire, 7 September 2000.

Young adults are the principal users of MDMA. The Milwaukee Police Department and the Milwaukee HIDTA indicate that most of the area's MDMA users are Caucasian males and females in their late teens and early twenties who often frequent the East Side of Milwaukee, described as a "1960s retro" area. Most of the people living in this area of Milwaukee wear 1960s-era clothing and listen to music of that decade. Milwaukee's East Side is also known for LSD activity. LSD users often follow 1960s-era bands such as the Grateful Dead and typically are between the ages of 20 and 30. A 1999 Wisconsin Student Survey revealed that 7 percent of high school students had used LSD.

Following are brief descriptions of dangerous synthetic drugs that have emerged as problems in Wisconsin.

- MDMA** (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine), also called ecstasy, XTC, E, X, and Adam, is a synthetic, psychoactive substance with stimulant and mild hallucinogenic properties. Known as the "hug drug" or "feel good" drug, MDMA reduces inhibitions and anxiety and produces feelings of empathy and extreme relaxation. MDMA is taken orally, usually in tablet form, and its effects last approximately 4 to 6 hours. The drug reportedly suppresses the need to eat, drink, or sleep, which enables MDMA users to attend parties or raves that can last 2 to 3 days. The drug's effects, which "short-circuit" the body's signals to the brain, often lead to severe dehydration and heat stroke intensified by the nonstop dancing and activity at raves. An MDMA overdose is characterized by rapid heartbeat, high blood pressure, faintness, muscle cramping, panic attacks and in more severe cases, loss of consciousness or seizure.
- GHB** (gamma-hydroxybutyrate), also known as liquid ecstasy, soap, easy lay, Georgia home boy, grievous bodily harm, liquid X, and goop, is a central nervous system depressant that was banned by the Food and Drug Administration in 1990. Originally sold in health stores, GHB was marketed as a releasing agent for growth hormones that would stimulate muscle growth. Combining GBL (see below) with either sodium hydroxide or potassium hydroxide easily produces GHB. Recipes are readily available on the Internet. At lower doses, GHB causes drowsiness, dizziness, nausea, and visual disturbances. At higher dosages, unconsciousness, seizure, severe respiratory depression, and coma can occur. An overdose usually requires emergency room attention.
- GBL** (gamma-butyrolactone), a chemical used in industrial cleaners, is closely related to GHB. GBL is a precursor to GHB and, when ingested alone, metabolizes into GHB. GBL is sold as a dietary supplement and marketed under a variety of health claims, from the treatment of insomnia to the reversal of baldness. Its popularity as a club drug has increased as raves and related activity have spread from large metropolitan areas to smaller cities and towns.
- Ketamine**, also known as K, special K, and cat valium, is a disassociative general anesthetic primarily for veterinary use. The only known source of ketamine is diverted pharmaceutical products. Ketamine liquid can be injected, applied to smokable material, or

consumed in drinks. A powdered form can be made by allowing the solvent to evaporate. The resulting white powder, once pulverized, looks very similar to cocaine. The powder can be put in drinks, smoked, or injected. Ketamine produces physical effects similar to PCP but with the visual effects of LSD. Users report a preference for ketamine over PCP or LSD because the “trip” lasts an hour or less. Use of the drug can cause delirium, amnesia, depression, long-term memory and cognitive difficulties, as well as fatal respiratory problems.

- **LSD** (lysergic acid diethylamide), also known as acid, boomers, and yellow sunshines, is a hallucinogen that induces abnormalities in sensory perceptions. The effects of LSD are unpredictable depending on the amount taken, the environment in which it is used, and the user’s personality, mood, and expectations. Users may feel the effects within 30 to 90 minutes after ingestion. The physical effects include dilated pupils, higher body temperature, increased heart rate and blood pressure, sweating, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, dry mouth, and tremors. LSD users report numbness, weakness, or trembling, and nausea is common. Two long-term disorders associated with LSD are persistent psychosis and hallucinogen persisting perception disorder (flashbacks).

flashbacks). LSD typically is taken by mouth and is sold in tablet, capsule, liquid, and microdot forms as well as on pieces of paper (blotters) that have absorbed the drug. Historically, LSD has been produced in northern California.

The DEA Milwaukee District Office and the Wisconsin DNE report that OxyContin is a growing concern. The DEA has added OxyContin to its list of priorities—as a potential threat—and is tracking OxyContin abuse trends throughout the state. OxyContin is a trade name product for the generic narcotic oxycodone hydrochloride, an opiate agonist. Opiate agonists provide pain relief by acting on opioid receptors in the spinal cord, brain, and possibly in the tissues directly. Opioids, natural or synthetic classes of drugs that act like morphine, are the most effective pain relievers available. Oxycodone is manufactured by modifying thebaine, and alkaloid found in opium. Oxycodone has a high abuse potential and is prescribed for moderate to high pain relief associated with injuries, bursitis, dislocation, fractures, neuralgia, arthritis, and lower back and cancer pain. It is also used postoperatively and for pain relief after childbirth. Percocet, Percodan, and Tylox are other trade name oxycodone products.

Availability

Other dangerous drugs, particularly MDMA and LSD, are increasingly available throughout the state. In a July 2000 DNE report, 19 counties throughout the state reported increasing problems with MDMA. MDMA, selling for \$20–\$30 per tablet, often is seized at raves and other parties. MDMA seizures by the Milwaukee Police Department increased from 5 tablets in 1999 to 1,418 tablets as of August 2000. The Winnebago Area Drug Task Force reported that no MDMA was seized in Oshkosh in 1999 but that more than 600 MDMA tablets were seized in the first 8 months of 2000. Madison court records show that one suspect arrested in the summer of 2000 had more than 1,100

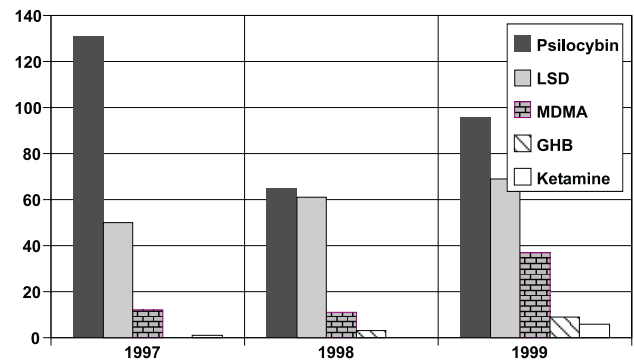
MDMA tablets in his bedroom; the suspect admitted to distributing 3,000 doses in the previous 2 weeks. The Milwaukee County District Attorney is very concerned about the increased availability and believes that only a fraction of the MDMA available is being seized. The Commander of the Dane County Narcotics and Gang Task Force said police encountered rising amounts of MDMA and other drugs linked to raves, such as LSD, in the Madison area in 2000. The Commander further stated that rave activity appeared to be increasing. Law enforcement officials throughout the state report the ready availability of blotter acid and microdot LSD.

Further evidence of the increase in the availability of other dangerous drugs is the number of Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory cases. (See Chart 5.) Although the number of MDMA submissions decreased slightly from 1997 to 1998, there was a sharp increase in 1999 and 2000, from 37 to 80. LSD and GHB submissions have increased steadily every year since 1997. Despite the limited quantities available, there is growing concern regarding GHB. Laboratory cases for GHB went from zero in 1997 to nine in 1999. Although still relatively few, the number of ketamine-related cases submitted also increased from 1997 to 1999. Ketamine is affecting bordering states such as Illinois, and its use may continue to increase in Wisconsin.

The increasing popularity of these drugs, especially among school age youth, will lead to increases in availability and use in some areas of the state. The West Central Drug Task Force reported an increase in GHB availability in 2000, noting its appearance on campuses and in bars. The task force also has identified psilocybin mushrooms and LSD in its jurisdiction. Several sheriffs of rural counties also reported that LSD

and psilocybin mushrooms are increasingly available in their areas. The Brown County Sheriff specifically reports an increase in LSD and psilocybin mushroom investigations and arrests. The Wisconsin State Patrol and Osseo Police Department in northwestern Wisconsin, along the Interstate 94 corridor, have encountered liquid PCP. The Florence County Sheriff states that there has been an increase in overall club drug use in that county.

Chart 5. State Crime Laboratory Cases for Other Dangerous Drugs, 1997–1999



Source: Wisconsin Department of Justice, Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory.

Violence

There is usually little violence associated with the use of other dangerous drugs, except for GHB. MDMA is called the “hug drug,” and it fosters feelings of friendship and compassion rather than violence. LSD can cause violent “trips,” but it is not known to cause violence among users. LSD trips can include violent hallucinations, but the effects usually do not extend beyond the user. Psilocybin mushrooms also are hallucinogens and are not known to induce violent behavior. GHB, however, often is used in the commission of rape.

Russian and Israeli DTOs transport a large portion of the MDMA available in the United States. These organizations are closely associated

and often cooperate with one another. Many of the Russian transporters immigrated to Israel before and after the fall of the Soviet Union, and many have acquired U.S. citizenship. Russian and Israeli transporters often are young, well educated, and very disciplined, although some are career criminals with violent records. There is a large Russian émigré population on the East Side of Milwaukee where most MDMA retail sales occur. If Russian and Israeli DTOs integrate themselves into this community and enter the Milwaukee MDMA market, violence may ensue as they compete with independent traffickers for market dominance.

Production

There is evidence of MDMA production in the state. An MDMA laboratory was seized in eastern Wisconsin in 1999, and in 2000, a DEA investigation into 40,000 MDMA tablets seized in New York implicated individuals in Wisconsin.

If traditional trafficking organizations such as the Russians and Israelis move into the market, an increase in MDMA laboratories is possible. There is no compelling evidence that LSD and GHB are being produced in Wisconsin.

Transportation

No one dominant group is responsible for transporting other dangerous drugs into Wisconsin. LSD sources appear to be from the West Coast, usually California. In 1999, undercover DEA agents made purchases of LSD on the East Side of Milwaukee and traced the sources to the West Coast. In that same year, an OCDETF investigation targeted a criminal group distributing LSD in the Eastern District of Wisconsin; the group's supply was traced to a nationwide dealer in San Francisco. The Milwaukee Police Department reports that Detroit is an LSD transshipment point. LSD produced on the West Coast is transported by private vehicle or parcel service to Wisconsin. LSD transporters in the area follow the tours of 1960s-era bands. The Milwaukee Police Department states that the number of LSD-related incidents increases when 1960s-era bands give concerts in the area. LSD transporters, normally Caucasian males in their twenties, move

the tablets via private vehicle. The Milwaukee Police Department indicated that most of the transporters involved in recent cases were Caucasian males in their late teens or early twenties who drove to Chicago to obtain the LSD.

Organized crime groups such as Russian and Israeli DTOs transport large amounts of MDMA into the United States from the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. Tablets have been seized in cargo shipments, strapped to the bodies of couriers, and hidden in compartments in suitcases. The Milwaukee Police Department states that there is a large Russian population primarily in the East Side of Milwaukee where most MDMA is distributed.

There is insufficient information pertaining to transportation groups for any other dangerous drugs distributed in Wisconsin.

Distribution

Local independent dealers, primarily Caucasian males, are the primary wholesale MDMA distributors in Wisconsin. The Milwaukee Police Department states that Caucasian males obtain their MDMA supplies from Chicago and then distribute the drug throughout the Milwaukee area. The Dane County Narcotics Task Force reports that Caucasian males are the primary wholesale distributors in its jurisdiction.

There is insufficient information concerning wholesale distribution for any other dangerous drugs in Wisconsin.

There is no dominant distribution group retailing other dangerous drugs in Wisconsin; most retailers in the state are independent dealers. The predominant retailers for MDMA and LSD are Caucasian males. The age of these retailers varies from late teens to early twenties (MDMA) to between 20 and 30 (LSD).

MDMA retail operations are centered on the East Side of Milwaukee and take place primarily at rave parties and clubs, but MDMA is encountered in other settings as well. In May 2000, two 17-year-old boys were arrested at a high school in West Allis, Wisconsin, for having 28 MDMA pills.

Also in 2000, the Milwaukee Police Department arrested a Hispanic male selling MDMA in a predominantly Caucasian suburban area. Detectives seized 100 MDMA tablets during the arrest. A Lake Winnebago Area Drug Task Force detective stated that independent Caucasian males are the primary MDMA retailers in Oshkosh and that MDMA retail operations are connected to college students in the area.

Outlook

Milwaukee will continue to serve as a focal point for the transportation and distribution of cocaine, marijuana, and heroin throughout Wisconsin, thereby serving as a crucial link between sources of supply and retail distribution operations within the state. Sophisticated Mexican DTOs as well as Chicago-based street gangs operate primarily in the Milwaukee area. Investigations have revealed that Nigerian and Dominican heroin wholesale operations also are centered predominantly in Milwaukee. Moreover, a large portion of all federal, state, and local narcotics investigations, arrests, and seizures in Wisconsin are in the Milwaukee area, and most law enforcement investigations outside the state that have a Wisconsin nexus involve Milwaukee.

Gang-controlled cocaine and crack retail operations located primarily in Wisconsin's larger cities will begin to spread to smaller communities to the north and west, resulting in increased violence in those areas. Gangs are migrating to smaller communities in Wisconsin, where the price of crack and powdered cocaine is much higher, to increase profits and to escape law enforcement scrutiny.

The cultivation of cannabis in indoor and hydroponic grow operations will continue to increase—supporting rising demand. Law enforcement officials report that indoor and hydroponic grow operations account for approximately 20 percent of the state's marijuana, and seizures of marijuana plants from indoor grow operations increased 30 percent from 1997 to 1999. New growing techniques, easily obtained on the Internet or in magazines, can produce

LSD also is retailed predominantly on the East Side of Milwaukee, but the drug is also found in more rural areas, such as Brown and Eau Claire Counties. The Brown County Sheriff stated that Caucasian males are the primary LSD retailers in that county. The West Central Drug Task Force stated that Caucasian males are the primary GHB retailers in the area.

marijuana with THC contents well above 10 percent, increasing marijuana's popularity and thus increasing the number of growers lured by potential profits. Cannabis cultivators also use the more discreet growing methods, indoor or hydroponic, to prevent detection and foil law enforcement eradication efforts.

Mexican methamphetamine transporters and distributors, currently concentrated in western Wisconsin, will continue to move eastward in search of new markets. Methamphetamine abuse is at high levels in both Minnesota and Iowa, and the problem is spreading to Wisconsin. Furthermore, Wisconsin has large national forests and wilderness areas, and limited law enforcement presence in these areas creates ideal conditions for setting up methamphetamine laboratories. Other factors contributing to the high potential for methamphetamine production in Wisconsin include an increase in demand within the state and stricter penalties for production in other states such as California, Missouri, and Iowa, a situation that may compel producers to relocate to Wisconsin. The precursor chemical anhydrous ammonia is easily obtained from local farms, and other chemicals such as ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and P2P can be acquired cheaply in Canada, which has less stringent regulations of precursors.

Another potential threat related to methamphetamine distribution is the Outlaws Motorcycle Club in Milwaukee. The club maintains strong ties among its chapters as well as with other motorcycle clubs across the country known for methamphetamine distribution. Although the Outlaws Motorcycle Club is not currently involved in

methamphetamine distribution, such participation would be a natural progression in operations. As methamphetamine use gains in popularity and abuse spreads, production of the drug will present a lucrative opportunity for the club.

Expect Nigerian and Dominican drug trafficking groups currently established in Milwaukee to expand their heroin operations into smaller cities such as Madison, Green Bay, and Wausau. A recent report from the Dane County Narcotics Enforcement Task Force stated that heroin overdose deaths increased in 1999—a possible indication of an increasing availability of the higher-purity SA heroin normally distributed by Dominicans. Furthermore, the number of investigations targeting

Nigerian and Dominican-related heroin operations based in Milwaukee or with a Milwaukee nexus increased significantly in 1999. The Milwaukee HIDTA indicated that both Nigerian and Dominican trafficking organizations were increasing their narcotics role in the area.

The increasing availability in Wisconsin of traditional drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin and increased MDMA and rave activity nationwide indicate an increase in MDMA use in the state is likely.

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Menominee County Sheriff's Office

Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office

Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office

Milwaukee District Attorney's Office

Milwaukee High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area

Milwaukee Police Department

Racine Police Department

State of Wisconsin

Department of Corrections

Department of Health and Family Services

Bureau of Substance Abuse Services

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Eastern District of Wisconsin

Western District of Wisconsin

U.S. Department of the Treasury

U.S. Customs Service

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