



News Release

National American Indian Housing Council
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Kim Hayes, 202-454-0931 or khayes@naihc.net
Jane DeMarines, 202-454-0911 or jdemarines@naihc.net

NAIHC Expands Methamphetamine and Crime Prevention Training

Washington, DC—9-28-2005—Responding to a flood of requests, the **National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC)** is expanding its training on dealing with methamphetamine use in tribal housing, launching a new Crime Prevention and Safety Program.

NAIHC has hired a full-time staff person to manage this program, which entails training and the development of additional new courses designed to help tribes and their tribally designated housing entities (TDHEs) deal with the growing meth problem in Indian housing.

Methamphetamine use and the illicit manufacture of meth or “meth labs” are becoming a major plague in Indian country. The average cost to decontaminate a home that has been used as a meth lab is nearly **\$10,000**, according to the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Office. The human cost of meth addiction is even more devastating: Meth users suffer from edginess, paranoia, agitation, and hallucinations. Meth abuse impacts the community as well, with increases in domestic violence, child abuse and homicide.

“The production and use of meth is a danger not only to the individual doing it, but to the entire community surrounding them,” said **NAIHC Chairman Chester Carl**. “**NAIHC** wants to provide tribal communities with the tools to combat this growing problem. This problem, if not addressed properly, robs our Native American youth of their future.”

These new courses will be **tailored to each region**, to provide the most current information available from the narcotics divisions of law enforcement in that region, with specific statistics. For example, different types of meth labs are “popular” in different states. While each course will cover all types of labs, the trainer will target the most prevalent types of labs in a given region.

NAIHC’s current training on “**Methamphetamine: A Growing Problem in Tribal Housing**,” provides information on how to handle encounters with abusers and clean up property used for meth labs. This **FREE** training is offered to Regional Indian Housing Associations and groups of three or more tribes/TDHEs located within close proximity of each other.

“**NAIHC** wants to do whatever is possible to assist tribes and TDHEs in creating and maintaining not only safe, quality affordable homes, but also safe, healthy, comfortable communities,” said **NAIHC Executive Director Gary L. Gordon**.

Participants in the training will come to understand:

- **What a meth lab is, the dangers it poses, and the costs it may entail.**
- **Types of illegal meth labs, specifically targeted to the participant’s locality.**
- **How and why meth labs are an epidemic in Indian country.**
- **How to identify warning signs that a meth lab may be in a tribal housing area.**

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- **How to safely deal with a running meth lab in a tribal housing unit:**
 - Whom to notify and when...
 - What the health risks are for investigators...
 - How they can protect themselves.
- **How to develop identification and prevention programs.**
- **Who is responsible for clean-up of a meth lab found in a tribal housing unit.**
- **How to safely clean up a meth lab.**

“The response to the meth training really took us by surprise,” said **NAIHC’s Special Projects Director, John Seignemartin**. “We budgeted for 9 training seminars, and we have already completed 13 since April 2005 with another 12 scheduled through the end of the year.” So far almost 900 people have attended these trainings. The response and feedback from those attending has been overwhelmingly positive. “Our membership wanted this training, and we are responding to those needs.”

Finding and Cleaning Up Meth Labs

The inspector training program for meth labs currently being developed by **NAIHC** will be an important addition to our new Crime Prevention and Safety Program, according to **Jay Barton, NAIHC’s new Technical Assistance/Training Specialist**. “We have taken the first steps to make tribal housing entities aware of meth and have talked about the lab clinics, but now we want to take it a step further so that tribal housing employees inspecting houses are better trained, better prepared and have better knowledge of what they are dealing with.” **NAIHC** hopes to roll this new training out in early 2006.

Mr. Barton most recently worked with the Harrah Police Department in Harrah, OK as a Range Master/Armorer. He has 17 years of law enforcement experience, mostly with the Potawatomi County Sheriffs Department. He also worked for 2½ years for the **Absentee Shawnee Housing Authority** and provided firearms instruction for that housing authority for 10 years.

Tribes/TDHEs Gain Valuable Information on Crime Tracking

In the upcoming year, **NAIHC** will develop a new course, focused on how to track criminal activity within Indian housing. **NAIHC** wants to help tribal housing entities track criminal activity and help train them on how to report the information. This can be done through training on how to research crime trends and teaching techniques to establish better working relationships with local law enforcement agencies/departments.

In Indian country, there is often a lack of understanding by the state, county and city municipalities on jurisdiction issues related to crime. Getting a law enforcement agency to come in and address meth abuse and crime prevention ranges from difficult to impossible on some reservations. This often results in meth users and makers feeling “safe” by coming onto tribal lands, where they believe they will not be charged or prosecuted.

A high priority for these new **NAIHC** training sessions is to obtain better statistics on meth prevalence in Indian country. The High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, a branch of the Drug Enforcement Agency, wants to get more data on these issues. “More accurate data will provide justification for further resources for [crime prevention and meth-related programs] within Indian housing.” said **Gary L. Gordon**.

TDHEs or tribes desiring more information on our **FREE** meth training seminars and/or on the new Crime Prevention and Safety classes should contact: **John Seignemartin, 800-284-9165 ext. 105**.

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NAIHC assists tribes and tribal housing entities in reaching their self-determined goals of providing culturally relevant, decent, safe, sanitary, and quality affordable housing for Native people in Indian communities and Alaska Native villages.

NAIHC...A Tradition of Native American Housing

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