

Drug Enforcement Administration Updates

Expansion of the NFLIS Program for Toxicology and ME/Coroners The DEA is expanding the NFLIS program to include (A) medical examiner and coroner office (NFLIS-MEC) data regarding deaths in which drugs were identified and (B) public and private toxicology laboratory (NFLIS-Tox) data on toxicology findings from antemortem testing. These two continuous data collection programs complement NFLIS-Drug and further support the DEA's drug regulatory and scheduling efforts. If you are interested in joining NFLIS-TOX or NFLIS-MEC, contact the administrators at DEA-NFLIS-MEC@rti.org or DEA-NFLIS-TOX@rti.org

Emerging Trends Program - The Emerging Trends Program (ETP) produces a quarterly report from archived seizure and analysis information from drug evidence analyzed by DEA's laboratory system. This report provides a snapshot of the new psychoactive substance (NPS) market in the United States. This report is disseminated through multiple email listservs reaching thousands of practitioners throughout the world and is posted to the National Drug Early Warning System (NDEWS) website. The data is used across various disciplines and practitioners including forensic chemists, toxicologists, medical examiners, policy makers, educators, and epidemiologists. The ETP provides expert technical assistance to state and local forensic laboratories in the interpretation of data, structural elucidation, and identification of NPS including opioid related compounds.

Reference Materials Program – The Reference Materials Program (RMP) for DEA is centralized at the Special Testing and Research Laboratory. This group of chemists specialize in the authentication, structural elucidation, and synthesis of drug reference materials. The program has one of the largest inventory of drug reference materials, which includes many materials that are not available from commercial vendors or are too expensive for smaller laboratories to purchase. DEA RMP provides some of these difficult to obtain reference materials, including many synthetic opioids, to state and local laboratories for their analyses. The data generated by these materials are published in the SWGDRUG Drug Monographs and in Mass Spectral and FTIR Instrumental Libraries which are resources provided to forensic laboratories throughout the world.

Real-time Network: The DEA Synthetic Opioids Real-Time Communication Network connects forensic chemists, toxicologists, coroners, medical examiners, and other stakeholders to address the analytical challenges associated with emerging and novel synthetic opioids. Through this growing network of members from across the United States and internationally, scientific data and analytical approaches are being shared for the detection and identification of synthetic opioids many of which are structurally similar substances. The collective scientific expertise across the various disciplines is a powerful tool in overcoming the analytical difficulties associated with new emerging compounds as they are being analyzed. Current membership includes an estimated 160 members from across the country and internationally.

Fentanyl Signature Profiling Program (FSPP): FSPP generates scientifically-based investigative leads for DEA special agents. Since FSPP was initiated, 64 sets of seizure linkages have been made. The program has actively involved state and local agencies in the effort to answer key questions regarding the illicit fentanyl market (wholesale to street-level distribution) and has analyzed material representative of over 560 kg of seized fentanyl.

DEA Resources

SWGDRUG MS Database: DEA has posted over 2850 scientific data files on the SWGDRUG website (www.swgdrug.org) for download and use by laboratory analysts throughout the world to assist with the identification of unknown substances.

SWGDRUG IR Library: DEA has posted over 500 scientific data files on the SWGDRUG website for download and use by laboratory analysts throughout the world to assist with the identification of unknown substances.

SWGDRUG Drug Monographs: DEA has posted more than 415 drug monographs containing detailed information and verified analytical data for use in verification of acquired reference standards.

Information on being added to the Real-Time Network and other DEA initiatives can be found at <https://www.ascl.d.org/opioid-resources/> State and local chemists can request reference materials and training by contacting DEALabRefMaterials@usdoj.gov or DEA.Emerging.Trends@usdoj.gov

Last updated: October 22, 2018