

DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL (DTSC)
HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTION 25354.5
EMERGENCY REMOVAL ACTIONS

(Rev. 08/08/2010)

Pursuant to Section 25354.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, DTSC conducts emergency removal actions at clandestine drug labs (illegal drug labs) at the request of State and local law enforcement agencies. DTSC's contractors typically remove hazardous substances that may pose an immediate threat to public health and/or the environment while the enforcement officials are on scene. During the emergency removal actions, contractors remove and properly dispose of contaminated lab equipment, chemicals used to make the illegal drugs (usually methamphetamine), lab chemical wastes, and other grossly contaminated materials. DTSC does not perform additional assessment work beyond standard emergency removal actions and makes no determination regarding the need for additional or future cleanup work at the emergency removal location.

DTSC's drug lab-related, emergency removal actions generally fall within three categories: 1) illegal drug labs or storage of drug lab equipment and/or materials in or near structures, 2) illegal drug lab materials found abandoned on or near roads, alleys, fields, vacant lots, etc., and 3) illegal drug lab materials found in transit (mobile locations, namely in cars, trucks, etc.). DTSC does not provide emergency removal support to federal law enforcement agencies that pursue illegal drug labs in California. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration operates independently and uses its own contractors to remove hazardous materials discovered in the course of their work.

DTSC maintains a limited cost-tracking database to manage and pay appropriate contractor invoices for removal costs. The data source is an expenditure report with the contractors' invoice information and the reported removal action locations. The reported location information may or may not include the actual location of the illegal drug lab for several reasons. First, DTSC receives the location information verbally from law enforcement or local environmental health officials in the initial request for emergency support. Second, DTSC does not verify the information received and does not perform "data cleaning" or other measures to ensure data quality. Third, the location information may not be the actual location of an illegal drug lab or any hazardous substance release to the environment. The initial report may have provided the location of the nearest identifiable address to an illegal drug lab or mobile lab or abandonment of illegal drug lab wastes, or a nearby meeting location for the contractor.

Consequently, DTSC does not guarantee the accuracy of the address or location information or the condition of the location listed. The listing of an address or location in this database does not indicate that any illegal drug lab materials were or were not present there, and does not constitute a determination that the address or location either requires or does not require additional cleanup work or mitigation action.

DATA DICTIONARY: DTSC's data base of drug lab costs uses various fields as described below.

CLUE Number:	<p>The Clandestine Lab Unit Expenditure (CLUE) Number is the unique tracking number DTSC assigns to each illegal drug lab emergency removal action. The first six digits reflect the year and month of the request for assistance. The last three digits refer to the sequential number of the request in the month that the request was received.</p> <p>Example: CLUE Number 200205065 -- DTSC received this request in May, 2002, and it was the 65th request of that month.</p>
Date:	<p>The Date field is the date DTSC received a request for removal action from law enforcement. It is generally the same date as the law enforcement action at the location; however, it may be one or more days after the law enforcement action at the location.</p>
County:	<p>The County field identifies the reported county of the illegal drug lab location. The reported county may not be correct because county boundaries can be difficult to ascertain in rural areas.</p>
Location:	<p>The Location field contains the address provided by the law enforcement agent or local environmental health official requesting DTSC's assistance. Locations of illegal drug labs in urban areas typically include a street and number. The locations reported in rural areas are less specific and often less accurate. Some rural labs have a street number address while others include only distances and directions from major roads or highways, or nearest identifiable address. In some cases, the reported location may be the location of a meeting place rather than the actual lab location.</p>
City:	<p>The City field is the municipality reported as the illegal drug lab location or is the closest city known to the requesting agent. Not all locations are within the municipal boundaries of the listed city.</p>
Zip Code:	<p>The Zip Code field contains the location's zip code as provided in the initial law enforcement request. Reliable and accurate zip code information is not always available when DTSC receives the request, particularly for rural locations.</p>
Lab Type:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) (L) Illegal Drug Lab –location where an illegal drug lab was operated or drug lab equipment and/or materials were stored. 2) (A) Abandoned Drug Lab Waste - location away from an actual illegal drug lab where drug lab waste and/or equipment were abandoned. 3) (M) Mobile Lab – location where illegal drug lab equipment and materials were found in a vehicle or other mode of transport.