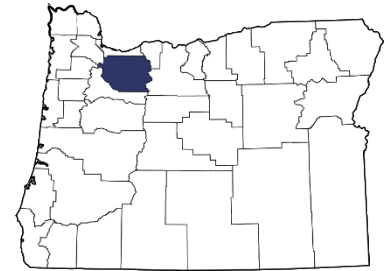




Clackamas County Drug Trends

This report summarizes major trends related to illicit drug use and trafficking in Clackamas County, Oregon based on available open-source statistics and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) supported law enforcement efforts.



HIDTA DESIGNATED - 2002

County Snapshot

Clackamas County is nearly 1,870 square miles and is part of the Portland metropolitan area. Based on census data reported by the United States Census Bureau, Clackamas County is home to an estimated 423,177 residents, which is 9% of the state's population, making it the third most populous county in Oregon.¹⁴ This report summarizes the impact of illicit drug use and trafficking throughout the county.

Based on law enforcement and public health data reported during 2023 methamphetamine and fentanyl continue to impact communities throughout Clackamas County. According to law enforcement survey data, fentanyl and methamphetamine remain the principal drug threat in the county due to high availability and high demand. Fentanyl has significantly increased in use and availability in the county, impacting local communities as overdose incidents continue to rise. Heroin availability has increased over the past year with law enforcement officers surveyed reporting no change in demand among people who use heroin.

Fatal and non-fatal overdose incidents continue to impact communities in Oregon from pill and powder forms of fentanyl present in the illicit drug supply lines. Informal reporting by law enforcement and public health partners indicates people who use drugs (PWUD) desire to use fentanyl in powder form continues to be popular due to the unpredictable dosing of fentanyl in pill form. According to harm reduction partners, the PWUD community reports concern over the number of overdoses related to pill use and believes the powder is safer, allowing for more control over consistent dosing. Rising seizures of powder fentanyl throughout the United States and the presence in the local drug supply reflect this change in fentanyl use and add additional public health and safety concerns throughout the county.

Drug Availability and Use Trends

According to statistics provided by the OHA using the SUDORS, unintentional drug overdose deaths in Clackamas County have continued to rise over the past several years.¹⁵ In 2020, 50 drug overdose deaths were confirmed, and continued to rise, reaching a high of 78 total drug overdose deaths in 2022. During the first half of the year in 2023, 37 drug overdose deaths have been confirmed and the number is anticipated to increase as mortality data for 2023 is completed.

HIDTA-designated task forces in Clackamas County seized an annual average of 55.2 kilograms of methamphetamine each year between 2019 and 2023.¹⁶ Fentanyl emerged as a threat during this same time, with 125,750 pills and 3.2 kilograms of powder seized in 2023, a slight decrease from 2022. Cocaine seizures have remained stable, with just over 1 kilogram seized in 2023, and the number of seizures like previous years (see Figure 1, page 2).

¹⁴ [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: United States](#)

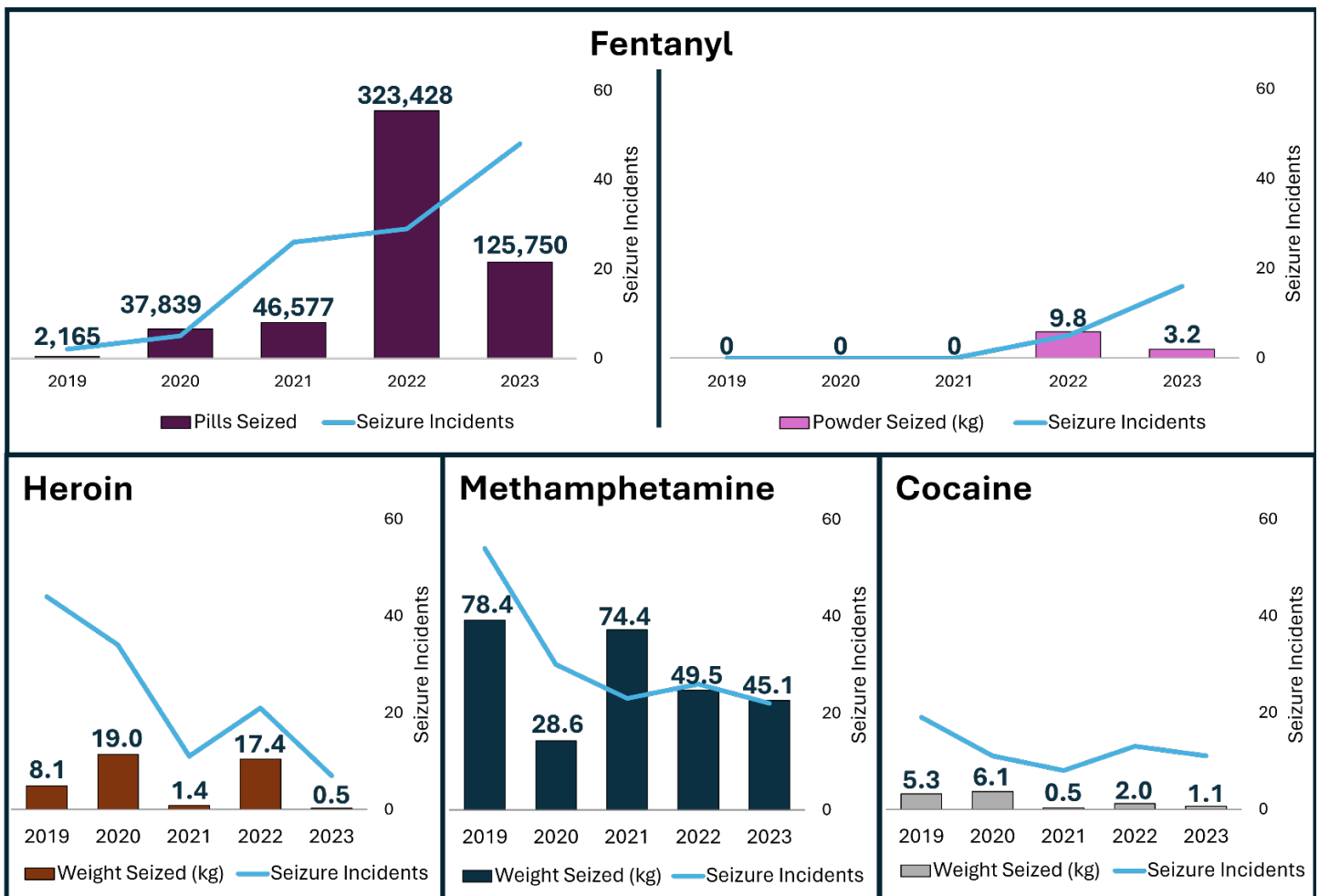
¹⁵ [CDC's State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System \(SUDORS\) | Drug Overdose | CDC Injury Center](#) – Oregon Health Authority

¹⁶ HIDTA Designated Task Forces: Refer to the Current Countywide Efforts section of this report.

Heroin seizures significantly decreased with one-half a kilogram seized in 2023, down from 17.4 kilograms seized in 2022. Bulk marijuana seizures decreased significantly with 23 kilograms seized in 2023, less than the average 177 kilograms seized per year between 2019 and 2021. In addition to drug seizures, HIDTA task forces conducted 45 drug-related arrests and seized 96 firearms and \$291,907 in cash and assets. Cash and assets seized by the DEA Portland District Office (DEA-Portland) and Oregon State Police (OSP) Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE) are captured under the statewide initiatives and not broken out by location in the HIDTA Performance Management Process (PMP).

Figure 1

Total of Illicit Drugs Seized by Oregon HIDTA Designated Enforcement Initiatives



Source: Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Performance Management Process (PMP) – Accessed 01/31/24

Drug Trafficking Trends

Mexico continues to be the primary source area for methamphetamine, fentanyl, heroin, and transited cocaine that is trafficked throughout the state. Once across the southwest border of the United States, illicit drugs are transported through California and Arizona to Oregon either directly or through the neighboring states of California and Washington. From active drug investigations and survey responses, various areas in California have been identified as local supply areas for many of the HIDTA task forces operating in the county.

Clackamas County Interagency Task Force (CCITF) disrupted or dismantled three drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) in 2023, two were involved in trafficking fentanyl. The operational scope for these DTOs was identified as two locally controlled and one with multi-state connections.

In 2023, CCITF seized one pill press associated with the manufacturing of illicit counterfeit “M30” pills containing fentanyl. The significance of the active pill press operation allowed the DTO to take control of the tableting operation away from sources in other states or countries, and produce the pills locally, controlling their contents.

Current Countywide Efforts

Within Clackamas County, CCITF is the HIDTA-designated task force that receives federal funding and support from the HIDTA Program. Along with enforcement efforts by this task force, three statewide HIDTA initiatives assist in investigations throughout the county and coordinate efforts with other HIDTA task forces. OSP DHE and the United States Marshals Service Fugitive Task Force (USMS FTF) assist with highway interdiction and fugitive apprehension, while the DEA-Portland conducts drug investigations throughout the state and coordinates with CCITF and other law enforcement agencies in Clackamas County.

In addition to the enforcement initiatives, the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA program provides resources and support for a public health analyst, funded by the Center for Disease Control Foundation, and a drug intelligence officer who collaborate to bring public health and law enforcement partners together focusing on overdose reduction and responses to overdoses as a part of the Overdose Response Strategy (ORS) and prevention. Through this cooperative effort these professional fields, which have traditionally operated separately, work to increase the sharing of real-time trends and emerging drug threats that impact communities.

Outlook

The fentanyl crisis continues to increase across the nation which is also consistent throughout Oregon and Clackamas County. With supply and demand increasing annually as well as a consistent supply of methamphetamine and cocaine, the need for resources to support law enforcement efforts to focus on the supply and public health to focus on demand through prevention and treatment are critical. Participation in multi-agency task forces combined with federal resources has proven to be successful in targeting the organizations importing and trafficking illicit drugs within the state. Cooperative efforts through public safety and prevention messaging among public health and law enforcement are necessary to help provide the residents with timely information and resources to combat the drug threats facing all communities in Clackamas County.

Your feedback regarding this report is important to us and is a measured performance metric.

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