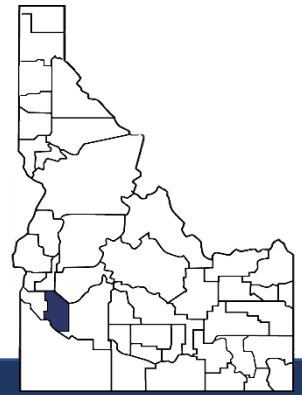




Ada County Drug Trends

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



HIDTA DESIGNATED - 2016

County Snapshot

Ada County is nearly 1,052 square miles and Boise is the county seat, the state's largest city, and state capital. Based on census data reported by the United States Census Bureau, Ada County is home to nearly 518,900 residents, 27% of the state's population.⁴ This report summarizes the impact of illicit drug use and trafficking throughout Ada County.

Based on law enforcement and public health data reported during 2023, the most significant drug threats to Ada County are fentanyl and methamphetamine, followed by cocaine and marijuana. Law enforcement officers recently surveyed reported a significant increase in methamphetamine with the continued high supply of fentanyl pills and an increased availability of cocaine in the county. Heroin availability has significantly decreased in the past year but has yet to be directly connected to the increase in fentanyl beyond anecdotal information. Marijuana remains high in availability with no reported change from the previous year's reporting.

Fatal and non-fatal overdose incidents continue to impact communities in Idaho 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

Substance use disorders in Idaho continue to impact communities through the rising number of deaths related to drug use. According to the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare website, drug-induced deaths in the state rose 8% between 2021 (353) and 2022 (381), with preliminary reporting of 251 deaths occurring as of September 2023.⁵ Fentanyl was identified in 188 overdose deaths in 2022, up 24% from the 152 deaths reported in 2021. Methamphetamine was identified in 133 overdose deaths and when combined with fentanyl numbers, the two were identified in nearly 87% of reported overdose deaths in 2022. Preliminary numbers published in November 2023 identified 148 fentanyl-related deaths so far in 2023 in the state, a slight decrease from the same time frame in 2022 (164) but is expected to rise once the 2023 coroner report data is finalized.

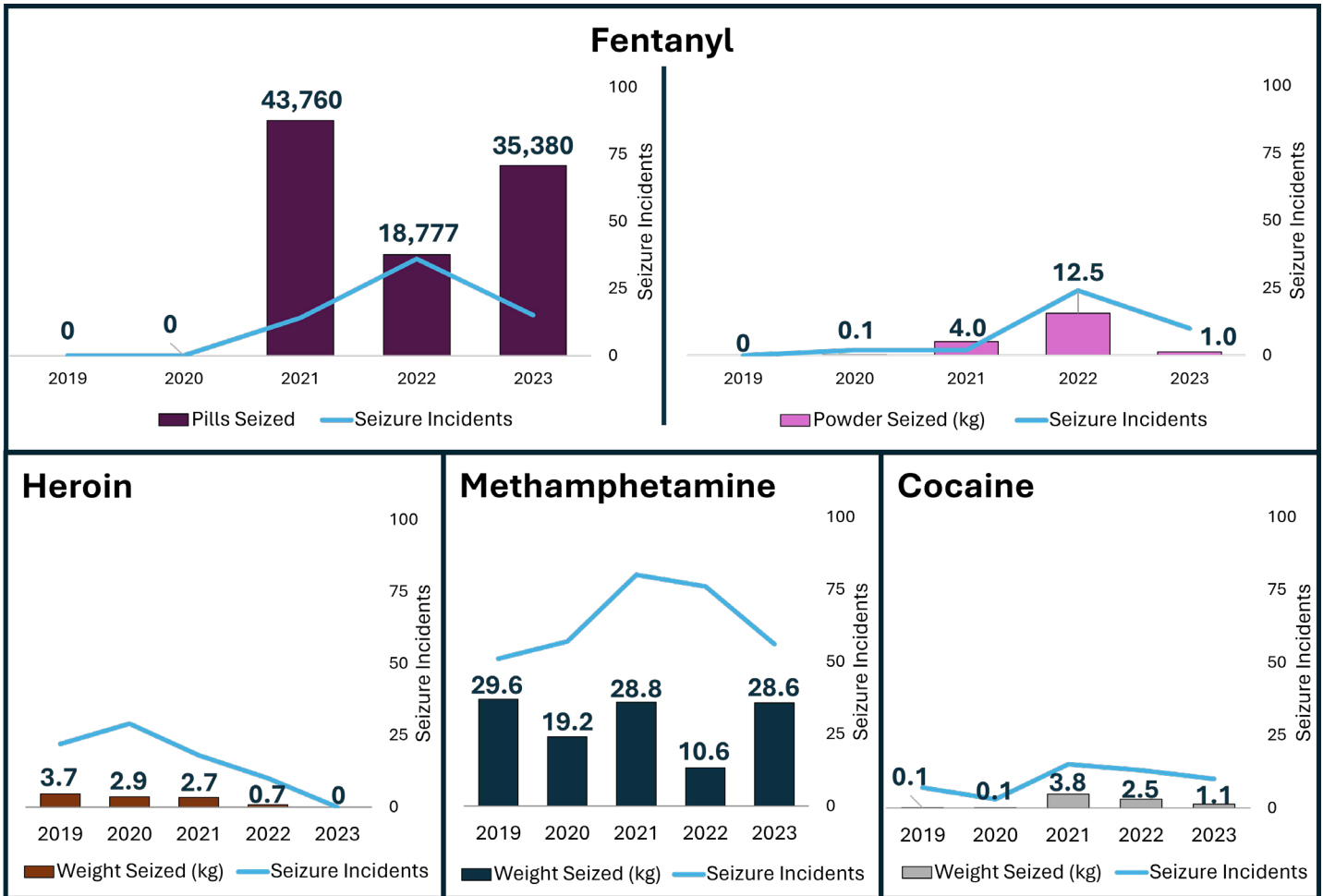
⁴ [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: United States](#)

⁵ [Drug Overdose Prevention Program | Idaho – Idaho Department of Health and Welfare – Accessed 2/1/24](#)

In 2023 task force officers seized 28.6 kilograms of methamphetamine, 1.1 kilograms of cocaine, 1 kilogram of powder fentanyl, and 35,380 fentanyl pills, along with 5.8 kilograms of illicit marijuana (see Figure 1). In addition to drug seizures, task force officers assigned to the DEA Boise Task Force (DEA-Boise) and Idaho State Police (ISP) Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE) conducted 306 drug-related arrests and seized 68 firearms throughout the HIDTA region in Idaho.

Figure 1

Total of Illicit Drugs Seized by Idaho 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 country for methamphetamine, fentanyl, heroin, and transited cocaine trafficked throughout Ada County. Once across the southwest border of the United States, illicit drugs are transported through California and Arizona to the neighboring northern states. From active drug investigations

and survey responses, areas such as Spokane, Washington, and Salt Lake City, Utah have been identified as local supply areas for many of the HIDTA task forces operating in Ada County.

DEA-Boise disrupted or dismantled four drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) in 2023, all of which were trafficking in methamphetamine with fentanyl or cocaine. Three of the DTOs were described as multi-state in scope and one international with operational connections to Mexico.

Current Countywide Efforts

Within Ada County, DEA-Boise, and ISP DHE, are the HIDTA-sponsored enforcement initiatives that receive federal support and funding. ISP DHE conducts interdiction efforts throughout the state and coordinates with other HIDTA task forces to assist in long-term investigations, while DEA-Boise and FBI conduct drug investigations throughout the state and coordinate with other HIDTA task forces and law enforcement agencies in Ada County. The District of Idaho USAO has a HIDTA-funded Special Assistant US Attorney to provide prosecutorial support for federal investigations conducted by HIDTA task forces in Idaho.

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 consistent throughout Idaho and Ada County. With supply and demand increasing annually and a consistent supply of methamphetamine and cocaine, the need for resources to support law enforcement efforts is critical. This support includes the focus on supply reduction through law enforcement efforts and public health's focus on demand reduction through prevention, treatment, and harm reduction. Participation by local, state, and federal law enforcement in multi-agency task force initiatives combined with federal resources has proven to be successful in targeting organizations responsible for 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 residents with timely information and resources to combat the drug threats facing all communities in Ada County.

Your feedback regarding this report is important to us and is a measured performance metric.
Please complete and submit the brief survey by following this link: [ISACC Strategic Report Survey](#)

This product was created by the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Information Sharing and Analytical Coordination Center (ISACC)