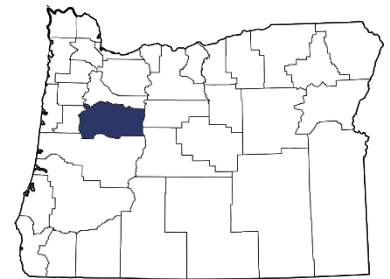




Linn County Drug Trends

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



HIDTA DESIGNATED - 2016

County Snapshot

Linn County is nearly 2,289 square miles and sits along the Interstate 5 corridor between Salem and Eugene. Based on census data reported by the United States Census Bureau, Linn County is home to an estimated 130,467 residents, which is 3% of the state's population.³² 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, fentanyl and methamphetamine continue to impact communities throughout Linn County. According to law enforcement survey data, methamphetamine and fentanyl 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. Cocaine and heroin availability have remained relatively stable based on drug seizures; however, task force officers indicate cocaine has increased while heroin has continued to decrease during 2023.

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 Linn County have continued to rise over the past several years.³³ In 2020, 14 drug overdose deaths were confirmed, and continued to rise, reaching a high of 31 total drug overdose deaths in 2022. During the first half of the year 2023, 18 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 Linn County seized an annual average of 12.1 kilograms of methamphetamine each year between 2018 and 2022, with a significant increase reported (100.9 kilograms) during 2023 because of several large highway interdiction stops conducted by the Oregon State Police.³⁴ Counterfeit pills containing fentanyl continue to be readily available, with 164,423 pills seized in 2023. Beginning in 2021, task forces began seizing notable quantities of powder fentanyl with 6.5 kilograms seized in 2023 (see Figure 1, page 2). Cocaine

³² [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: United States](#)

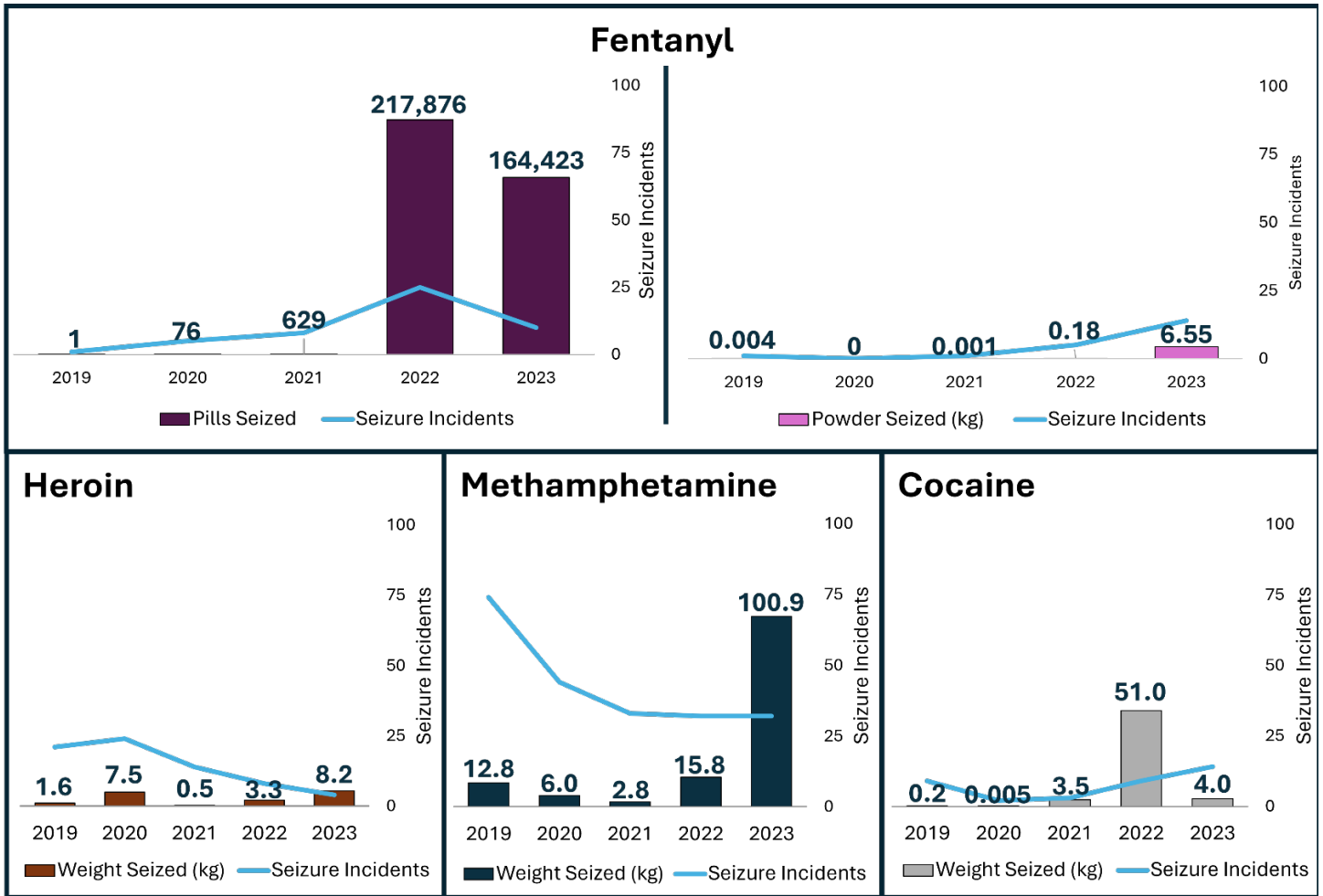
³³ [CDC's State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System \(SUDORS\) | Drug Overdose | CDC Injury Center](#) – Oregon Health Authority

³⁴ HIDTA Designated Task Forces: Refer to the Current Statewide Efforts section of this report.

seizures remain stable with nearly 4 kilograms seized during 2023, while heroin seizures were slightly higher during 2023 (8.2 kilograms) compared to 2022 (3.3 kilograms).

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

Illicit marijuana grow operations identified were slightly higher during 2023, with over 1,001 kilograms of bulk marijuana and 10,892 plants seized from 19 reported seizures. In addition to drug seizures, HIDTA task force officers conducted 38 drug-related arrests and seized 23 firearms and \$1,590,303 in cash and assets. Cash and assets seized by the DEA Eugene and Salem Resident Offices (DEA-Eugene, DEA-Salem) and OSP DHE are captured under the statewide initiatives and not broken out by location in the HIDTA Performance Management Process (PMP).

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

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California and Washington. From active drug investigations and survey responses, areas such as Salem and Eugene have been identified as local supply areas for many of the HIDTA task forces operating in the county.

The Line Interagency Narcotics Enforcement (LINE) team dismantled five drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) in 2023, trafficking fentanyl, methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin. Three were identified as having multi-state connections and the other two were reported to be locally controlled and operated.

Current Countywide Efforts

Within Linn County, LINE is the HIDTA-designated task force that receives federal funding and support from the HIDTA Program. Along with enforcement efforts by this task force, two 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-Eugene conducts drug investigations throughout the mid-Willamette Valley, central and southern coastal areas and coordinates with LINE and other law enforcement agencies in Linn 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 Linn 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 Linn 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)