



For Immediate Release

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MADIGAN: NEW LAW EFFECTIVE SUNDAY WILL REDUCE ACCESS TO KEY METH INGREDIENT; CONSUMERS TO SHOW ID BEFORE PURCHASING PSEUDOEPHEDRINE PRODUCTS

Chicago – Beginning Sunday, January 15, Illinois consumers and retailers will join law enforcement and legislators in the ongoing fight to prevent methamphetamine makers from easily purchasing the key ingredient needed to make their deadly drug.

Attorney General Lisa Madigan today reminded Illinoisans that beginning Sunday, consumers will be required to present identification at a retail or pharmacy counter before purchasing certain cold and allergy medications containing pseudoephedrine and ephedrine, the key ingredient in the production of methamphetamine. Madigan said she expects the restrictions provided in the Methamphetamine Precursor Control Act (MPCA) to create significant barriers for meth makers in obtaining the necessary supplies to produce their deadly drug and to result in a drop in the number of out-of-state meth makers crossing into Illinois to purchase these ingredients.

In an effort to educate the public about the new restrictions on the sale of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine products, Madigan's office has provided training seminars throughout the state for retailers and posted detailed information online at www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov/methnet.

“With the help of consumers and retailers across the state, our battle against methamphetamine will reach a critical new level by further reducing access to the key ingredient in this poisonous drug,” Madigan said. “This law brings law enforcement, retailers and consumers together, in a united front, to make it harder for criminals to complete their methamphetamine shopping lists,” Madigan said.

Effective January 15, 2006, the MPCA makes pseudoephedrine and ephedrine “schedule V controlled substances” – meaning they must be kept behind pharmacy counters. It requires that all single and multi-active ingredient products, tablets, liquids and gel caps be placed behind the pharmacy counter. Customers wishing to purchase these products will not need a prescription, although they will be required to display a photo ID and sign a log.

The law includes penalties for pharmacies and retail distributors and their employees found to be not in compliance with the new regulations, as well as

penalties for persons purchasing large amounts of pseudoephedrine or ephedrine products.

The first offense by a pharmacy or retail distributor can be penalized under the law with a \$500 fine, the second offense with a \$1,000 fine and the third offense with a \$5,000 fine. Store employees can face charges of a Class A misdemeanor for their first offense, a Class 4 felony for their second offense and a Class 1 felony for their third offense. Finally, people found to have purchased large amounts of pseudoephedrine or ephedrine products will face a Class B misdemeanor charge on their first offense, a Class A misdemeanor on their second offense and a Class 4 felony on their third offense.

As part of her effort to research and draft this bill, Madigan held three law enforcements summits across the state. Madigan learned that several states bordering Illinois recently had passed laws more restrictive than the Illinois law adopted at the beginning of 2005. Madigan also heard reports from law enforcement authorities indicating that meth makers from Missouri, Iowa, Kentucky and nearby states were coming to Illinois to purchase pseudoephedrine products. As a result of incidents such as these, Madigan worked with law enforcement leaders to draft the MPCA.

The MPCA was sponsored by State Rep. John Bradley and State Sen. William Haine. Madigan testified before both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees in support of the bill.

“Illinois again has one of the toughest laws in the nation when it comes to restricting access to ingredients used to make meth,” Madigan said. “This law ensures that Illinois is keeping up with the criminals who will go to any length to access the ingredients they need to make their drugs.”

For more information, please visit the Office of the Attorney General’s MethNet Web site at www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov/methnet.

-30-

[Return to January 2006 Press Releases](#)