



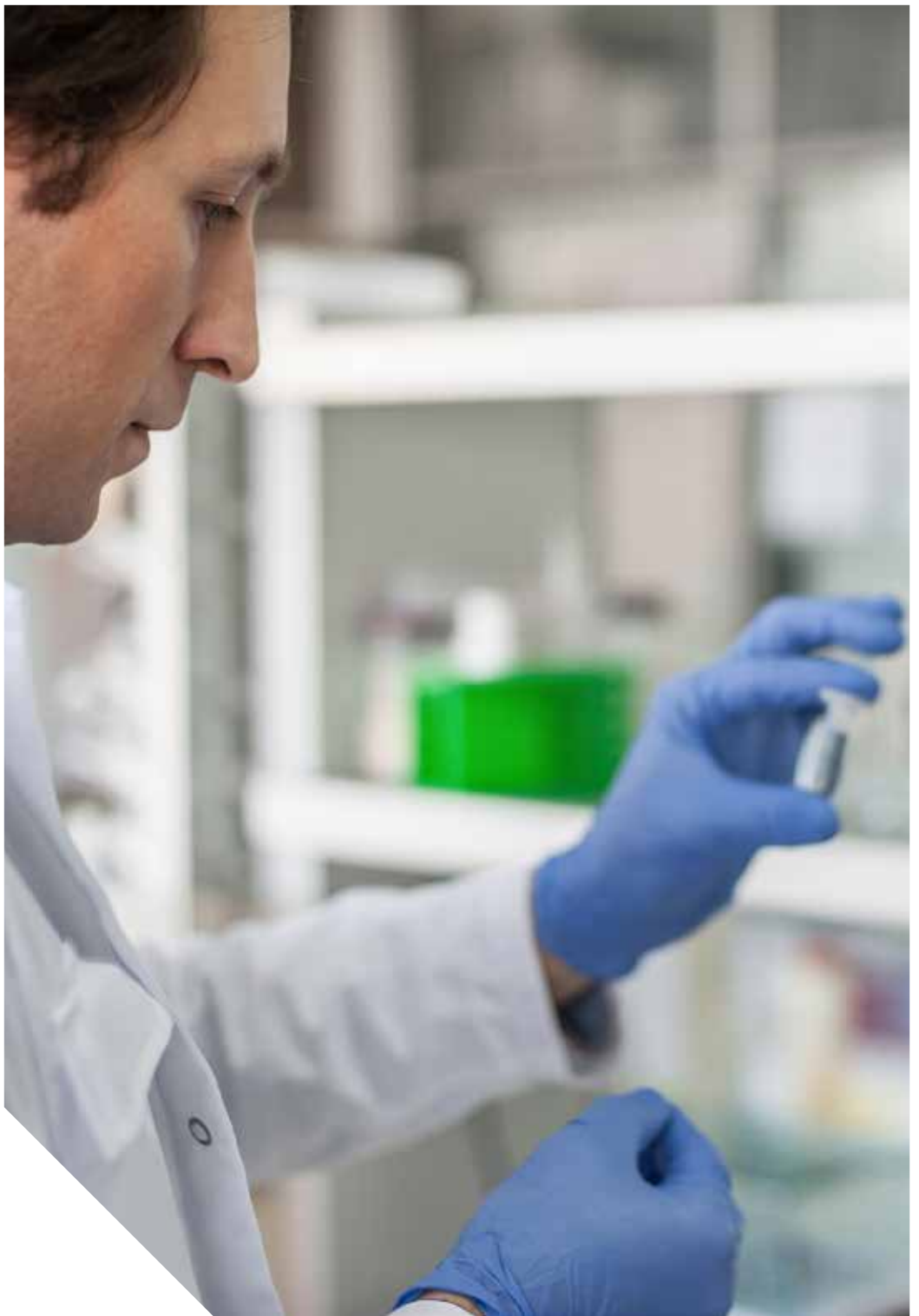
Understanding Methamphetamine Testing in New Zealand

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 **Betta Property
Compliance**

PROTECTING EVERYDAY KIWIS



Introduction

We are here to protect you and your investment; this booklet is a guide to the ins and outs of the merky world of methamphetamine (meth) testing.

It is an industry that has been widely publicised and somewhat criticised over the years, but one sure thing is that methamphetamine is not going anywhere, and it remains a widespread issue. Over the past five years of testing properties across New Zealand over 30% have come back positive for methamphetamine contamination.

Don't let methamphetamine contamination affect you, your families or your friends; get it tested.

This booklet is intended to educate you and help you understand more about methamphetamine testing in New Zealand.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our friendly customer service centre on 0800 422 386.

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What is methamphetamine?

Methamphetamine is a powerful, highly addictive stimulant that affects the central nervous system. In New Zealand it is frequently called ‘Meth’ or ‘P’ (short for ‘pure’).

It is also known by other names such as meth, chalk, ice and crystal, among many other terms; it takes the form of a white, odourless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder.

Methamphetamine is one of the most common forms of illicit amphetamines in New Zealand. It is powerful and highly addictive.

In New Zealand methamphetamine is most commonly available in two forms.

CRYSTAL METHAMPHETAMINE

This is the most potent form of methamphetamine and it is often called 'ice' due to its crystal-like appearance. It is usually colourless, and the crystals can range in size from granules to shards resembling shattered glass. This form of methamphetamine is usually smoked which results in rapid absorption and almost immediate and intense effects.

METHAMPHETAMINE POWDER

This is finer in appearance than crystal methamphetamine. It can vary in colour from white to brown, orange or purple. Methamphetamine powder can often be 'cut' or mixed with other substances to give the appearance of a larger quantity. Common things added include glucose, sugar, bi-carbonated soda and caffeine. Methamphetamine powder is water soluble, so it can be used intravenously, taken orally or 'snorted'.

METHAMPHETAMINE TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1887: Amphetamine first made in Germany.

1919: Methamphetamine developed in Japan.

1919-1999: Meth was used (but was not popular) to treat medical and other health issues such as obesity, narcolepsy, sinus and heroin addiction. It was also used during war times to keep soldiers awake and alert.

2000: Meth becomes a popular drug in much of the western world.

2015: Meth appears in the New Zealand media after being underground for years.

2017: New Zealand's first methamphetamine testing and decontamination standard released (NZS:8510:2017).

2018: The government's Chief Science Advisor, Professor Sir Peter Gluckman, released a report on methamphetamine contamination in residential properties – *Methamphetamine contamination in residential properties: Exposures, risk levels, and interpretation of standards (the CSA report)*.



Can meth make me sick?

LONG-TERM HEALTH EFFECTS:

- Cancer
- Nervous disorders/tremors
- Damage to kidneys and liver
- Birth defects
- Reproductive problems
- Death

SHORT-TERM HEALTH EFFECTS:

- Headaches
- Watery or burning eyes
- Nausea
- Burning skin
- Coughing or choking
- Pain in diaphragm
- Feeling of coldness or weakness
- Shortness of breath/dizziness
- Decrease in cognitive function
- Vertigo
- Convulsions
- Sleep disorders

What are the signs of a property being contaminated?

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS THAT THE PROPERTY MAY HAVE BEEN USED AS A METH LAB?

- Yellow-ish discoloration on walls, drains, sinks and showers
- Blue-ish discoloration on taps
- Fire detectors are removed or have tape over them
- Burning in eyes, itchy throat, metallic taste in the mouth, breathing problems when in the house
- Strong odour similar to the smell of cat urine or ammonia
- Bleach stains on carpet, dark stains in sinks (yellow, purple or red)
- Burn piles in the yard
- Appearance of not caring such as graffiti on walls
- Most of the time meth is odourless but while it's being cooked, it has the smell of burning plastic.

OR, HAS SOMEONE BEEN SMOKING METH?

Ask the neighbours:

- Are curtains always or often closed?
- Are there excessive numbers of people coming and going?
- Is there random behaviour (e.g. not seeing occupants for days)?
- Unwell feeling when entering the house
- Minimal furnishings within the house
- Rubbish and/or graffiti around indicating unmotivated people
- Light bulbs removed

The only way to be sure whether a home is contaminated is by carrying out laboratory analysed testing. Unfortunately, there is no one suburb, region or house type that's more popular to meth manufacturers or users. Any house could be a meth house.



Testing for Methamphetamine

How to test for its presence?

The most recognised form of testing for methamphetamine contamination is to take physical swab samples on the internal surfaces of the property.

This can be done using one of two methods: either an instant result screening method or a laboratory analysed screening method. Both should be undertaken by a trained testing agent to ensure that the sample location chosen reflects the most likely location of contamination. Both testing methods are sensitive, and the area and type of surface sampled can greatly affect the outcome. Neither method of sampling should damage the property in any way, the samples are only rubbed on the surface. No physical sample is taken from the property.

What is the difference between lab based and instant kits?

The difference between instant result screening and laboratory screening is that the laboratory-based tests are more accurate, provide more information and are an accepted method of sampling under the New Zealand Standard NZS8510.

The negative of a laboratory-based screening method is that the results are not instant. The samples are taken onsite and couriered to an independent IANZ accredited laboratory for analysing. Depending on the courier speed, results can be available to the client within one to three days from the site inspection.

What are the different types of lab-based testing?

Now that you understand the two different ways to undertake methamphetamine contamination testing (instant screening and laboratory screening) it is important to understand the two different types of testing. Lab-based testing is broken into two methods, these are initial screening and detailed testing. These are explained below.

INITIAL LAB-BASED TESTING

Initial methamphetamine testing (often referred to as composite screening) is undertaken to determine whether methamphetamine is present in the property or not. It is a combination of either a single swab used multiple times or multiple swab samples analysed together to give a single result. This single result is the maximum amount of methamphetamine present. Initial testing is the simplest and cheapest form of testing.

This form of initial methamphetamine testing is NZS8510:2017 compliant and should be undertaken by a trained testing agent.

PROS:

- Cheap
- Accurately determines if methamphetamine is present or not

CONS:

- One single result, not room by room results
- It determines the maximum amount of methamphetamine in the property, which can cause unnecessary concern
- Not recommended to be used to determine the decontamination method if methamphetamine is found to be present
- If the level exceeds standard guidelines, detailed testing is required

DETAILED LAB-BASED TESTING

Detailed methamphetamine testing (often referred to as room by room testing) is undertaken once a positive initial methamphetamine test has been undertaken or when you are aware smoking or manufacture has occurred in the property. Detailed testing is when a sample or samples are taken in each room of the property (the size and surface type will determine the number of samples in each room). This will determine the exact amount of methamphetamine in each room. Based on this detailed testing accurate decontamination advice can then be determined.

PROS:

- Very accurate (room by room accuracy)
- Decontamination plan can be confirmed

CONS:

- Expensive
- Takes longer onsite

STANDARD TESTING PROCESS:



ORDER TEST

Initial lab-based screening determines if methamphetamine is present



DETAILED LAB TEST

If the initial result is over the recommended guidelines



DECONTAMINATION

If individual rooms are considered contaminated



DETAILED TESTING

To confirm whether if the decontamination has been successful



CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Issued if the individual rooms are now under the recommended guidelines



What is NZS8510:2017?

NZS8510:2017 is the New Zealand Standard for Testing and Decontamination of Methamphetamine-Contaminated Properties.

This is the recommended standard that all methamphetamine samplers work to. The document provides guidance on people's risks of exposure to harm caused by the presence of unacceptable levels of methamphetamine contamination in properties (including vehicles and caravans). It establishes decontamination levels to guide the decontamination of affected properties. It also sets out procedures for testing properties and the disposal of any contaminated waste.

The Standard addresses all sources of methamphetamine contamination, and aims to ensure consistency, reliability, and competency for methamphetamine screening, sampling, testing and, where necessary, the decontaminating of meth affected properties. From a client's perspective it is important that the testing methods used by a methamphetamine sampler follow those of the Standard.

What is the safe legal limit 0.5, 1.5 or 15 µg?

The industry originally adopted the acceptable level for methamphetamine contamination at 0.5 µg/100cm² as documented in the Ministry of Health 2010 Guidelines for the Remediation of Clandestine Methamphetamine Laboratory Sites.

The Ministry of Health guideline was superseded in 2017 by NZS8510:2017 (the New Zealand Standard for Testing and Decontamination of Methamphetamine-Contaminated Properties.) During the preparation of this Standard the committee sought expert advice on the exposure of risk from Environmental Science and Research Ltd (ESR) and the Ministry of Health, and after reviewing a large number of public submissions, the committee decided to set the maximum acceptable level of methamphetamine in an affected property at 1.5 µg/100cm².

In 2018 the government asked Professor Sir Peter Gluckman, the government's Chief Science Advisor, to assess all the available scientific evidence and medical literature regarding the risks of exposure to methamphetamine residue in houses. The assessment examined the likelihood of health risks from methamphetamine residue caused by smoking compared

to that caused by manufacture and report on it (CSA report). He concluded that exposure to methamphetamine levels below 15 µg/100 cm² would be unlikely to give rise to any adverse effects. This level still incorporates a 30-fold safety buffer on a conservative estimate of risk. Sir Peter also states in his report that remediation is certainly warranted if methamphetamine levels signify that manufacture is likely to have taken place. He goes on to document that where lower levels are detected, remediation is often not justified. However, as low levels cannot definitively rule out manufacture, remediation involving cleaning down to the 1.5µg/100cm² standard may be prudent if there is also reason to suspect meth lab activities.

At present there is no way for any sampling technique to determine the difference between meth smoking residue or methamphetamine manufacture residue. There are often no visible signs of manufacture in a property. For this reason, we therefore suggest adopting the New Zealand Standard recommended level of 1.5 µg/100cm². The majority of insurers agree with this stance.

What happens if methamphetamine contamination is found?

This depends on what levels of methamphetamine are found in a property and where it is located. It also depends on the reason for getting the test.

Currently it is our understanding that there is:

- no requirement (subject to that which may be imposed by the terms and conditions of some insurance policies) to advise the police if methamphetamine is found to be present.
- no requirement to notify Council (it will typically not be put on your LIM report unless police are involved). NOTE: malicious tenants/purchasers have been known in the past to send copies of positive methamphetamine reports to council/Territorial Authorities.
- no requirement to tell tenants if the levels do not exceed or are not likely to exceed currently acceptable guidelines.
- a requirement to tell prospective purchasers of a property if any level of methamphetamine is present.

If you are an owner of a property with methamphetamine contamination, then

there are a number of directions you can take. It is important to note that if you have only had initial testing done on the property, then it is very hard to make an informed decision; it is therefore recommended that detailed laboratory based testing is undertaken prior to panicking or trying to work out a direction forward.

If detailed testing has been completed and the results are positive for methamphetamine, the below is a recommended direction forward:

- Notify your insurer in the first instance.
- Speak to your methamphetamine sampler for advice prior to looking at decontamination options.
- Clean the property yourself (this is not recommended and can often cost you more in the long run).
- Engage a decontamination company that is happy to work with your insurer and sampler. There are many different techniques on the market so allow time to explore all options.



CAN OTHER CHEMICALS CAUSE A FALSE METHAMPHETAMINE READING?

It is extremely unlikely that another chemical will cause a false reading when the sampler is using laboratory-based testing methods.

The analysing at the laboratory is very sensitive, undertaken by scientists and is very detailed. Therefore, the probability of there being a false negative or false positive is extremely unlikely. If the results you get are not what you are expecting the very last possibility would be that it is caused by another chemical.

How much does a test cost?

Methamphetamine testing ranges in price depending on the type of test and who is undertaking the testing. Our pricing is as follows:

- For a NZS8510:2017 non-compliant laboratory-based screening assessment prices start from \$159+GST (for up to eight samples composited together).
- For a NZS8510:2017 technique compliant laboratory-based screening assessment prices start from \$199+GST.
- For detailed room by room laboratory-based testing prices start from \$159+GST per sample taken.
- Travel fees may apply outside of metropolitan areas.

All prices include phone correspondence with the inspector and advice on the results.

PARTNER PROGRAMME

For property managers, large property portfolio owners, iwi, social housing providers, government organisations or corporate clients we have a Betta partners programme. This programme is designed to cater for our loyal clients who get testing done on a regular basis.

All partners on this programme will receive:

- priority at the laboratory
- priority booking slots
- faster report turnaround
- 20th of the month invoicing
- workorder processing

We are an approved maintenance manager and government organisation supplier.



What makes us Betta?

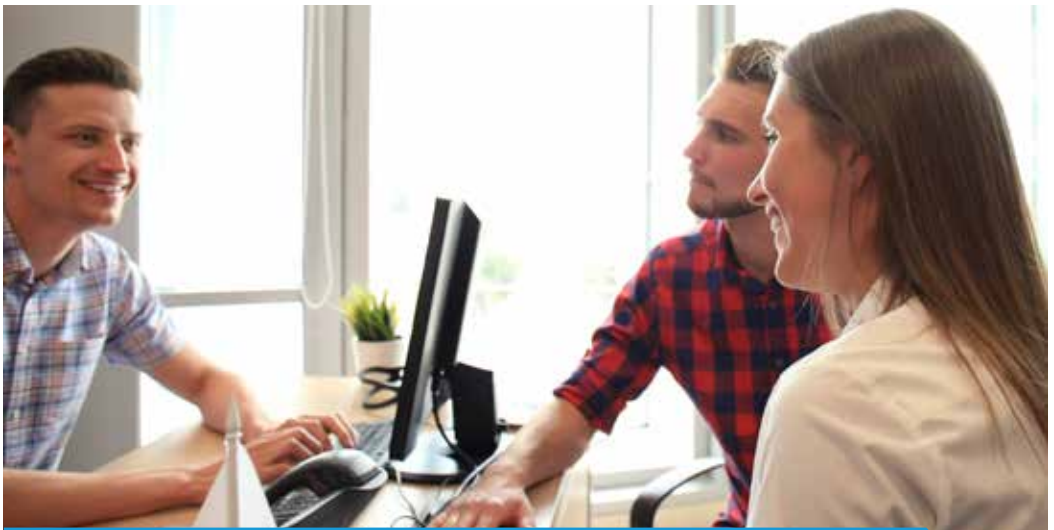
There are many things that make us Betta, but the one main thing is that we care. We have your back.

ALL YOUR REPORTS WILL:

- be completed by trained testing agents.
- have all samples tested by a completely independent IANZ accredited lab with scientists analysing the samples.
- provide a simple answer for complete clarity and understanding.
- provide a direction forward – so that you are not left without a solution.
- be written and released in a quick turn-around time so that you not left waiting.
- be completely confidential to you.

WE ARE:

- discrete onsite.
- do not have any vehicles with “meth” branded on the side.
- completely independent.
- nationwide.
- competitive on price (on travel & discounted lab fees).
- here to help provide you with a solution not a problem.



About the Betta Group

The Betta Group operates nationwide, covering every nook and cranny of the country. All our inspectors are typical Kiwis and are here to help and protect you.

We're a one-stop-shop, offering you a complete inspection solution operated over multiple brands. Call one provider to complete all the inspections you require with Freephone support.



Freephone: 0800 422 388
info@bettagroup.co.nz
www.bettainspectit.co.nz

Building Inspection	Meth Testing	Asbestos Sampling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry-qualified. • Quick turnaround. • Accepted by all banks. • Comprehensive reports. <p>From \$495^{+GST}</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained samplers. • Lab-analysed samples. • Definitive answers. • Independent & confidential. <p>From \$159^{+GST}</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry trained. • Lab-analysed samples. • Simple Yes/No answers. • Completely independent. <p>From \$299^{+GST}</p>

Asbestos Surveying	Air Monitoring	Removal Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IP402 qualified inspectors. • Completely independent. • Samples processed by IANZ Lab. • Easy to read report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solution focussed. • Clear reporting. • Completely independent. • Compliant. • Definitive answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full support. • Uncomplicating the complicated. • Risk mitigation. • Industry standard advice.
From \$299^{+GST}	Price on Application	Price on Application

Meth Testing	Lead Testing	Mould Testing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry trained. • Lab-analysed samples. • Quick results. • Simple Yes/No answers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry qualified. • Completely independent. • Lab-analysed samples. • Discrete & confidential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry qualified • Independent • Definitive result • Clear reporting
From \$159^{+GST}	From \$159^{+GST}	From \$159^{+GST}
Rental Inspections	Playground Inspections	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive reporting. • No tenant conflict. • No admin. • Tax deductible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified RPII inspectors. • Full PI & PL insurance. • Police vetted inspectors. • Health & safety compliant. 	
From \$199^{+GST}	From \$695^{+GST}	



Betta book

bettapropertycompliance.co.nz

info@bettagroup.co.nz

0800 422 386

Our easy booking process makes arranging your inspection a doddle. The Betta team will organise access to the property so the inspection can be carried out to suit your deadline.

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