



Casper Star-Tribune
Study: Meth use might cost Wyo \$200M annually

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Meth abuse may cost Wyoming nearly \$200 million annually, according to a group working to reduce use of the dangerous stimulant in the United States.

The estimate, from the Meth Project Foundation, is based on current treatment data and a just-released RAND Corporation study, which estimated the national cost of meth use at \$23.4 billion in 2005.

"The threat, and more importantly, the economic and financial burden of meth abuse, is significant and really impacts the entire state," said Chris Rose, the foundation's executive director.

The RAND study, released Wednesday, found several factors contributed to the overall cost of meth use including drug treatment, lost productivity, crime, health care and environmental hazards. For example, it estimated meth use nationally resulted in \$4.2 billion worth of crime and criminal justice costs and nearly \$700 million in lost productivity.

"Our cost estimates provide the first evidence of the scope of the meth problem nationally," the authors' of the study wrote. "We find that meth does impose a significant burden on individuals and society."

While meth taxes the nation's health care and treatment system, the study concluded the drug's greatest burden on society comes from addiction, premature deaths, crime and lost productivity.

The study was sponsored by the Meth Project Foundation and the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

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