



# Checklist for hiring companies to test or clean up drug contamination

This checklist will help you to hire the services of a reputable and qualified company to test or clean up a house where a clandestine drug laboratory (clan lab) has been found, or where drugs such as meth have been smoked.

**Aim to use a testing company where they employ someone with the following tertiary qualifications:** occupational hygiene, forensic science, environmental science or environmental health.

**Use search terms to find suitable companies:** forensic cleaning, forensic testing, decontamination cleaning, crime scene cleaning, meth contamination testing or cleaning, clan lab testing or cleaning, Perth, WA.

## Drug contaminated houses

A **clan lab** is a house used to make drugs (like meth). A clan lab will need strict testing and depending on the testing results, remediation (cleaning) throughout impacted areas of the property. Some items (e.g. curtains, furniture) may need to be thrown away as recommended by a remediation specialist.

**Drug smoke houses** are places where drugs like meth have been smoked but not made. The level of contamination may differ depending on how often meth was smoked inside. Testing will help find out the level of contamination and how much cleaning is needed.

If drug contamination, especially from meth, is suspected in a house and there's no sign of clan lab activity, the most likely source of contamination is from drug smoking. This means the level of cleaning is generally not as intensive or expensive.

## Three main steps to manage drug contamination

1. **Testing:** done by testing companies and accredited labs to find out if contamination is present.
2. **Cleaning (remediation):** done by specialist cleaning companies to remove any contamination.
3. **Validation:** properties are re-tested to make sure the place is safe to live in after cleaning.

## How to choose the right company

**Do your homework:** look up reviews and ask for recommendations.

**Get multiple quotes:** ask at least three companies for prices and services so you can compare.

**Get it in writing:** always have a written agreement that says what work will be done, how much it will cost, and how long it will take.

**Use two companies:** hire one company to do testing and validation (re-testing), and a second, different company to do cleaning. This will help you from being overcharged or quoted for unnecessary work.

**Check insurance:** make sure the company has insurance in case something goes wrong.

**Follow the rules:** companies should follow the Department of Health's [Guide for Testing and Remediation of Methamphetamine and Illicit Drug Residues in Residential Properties](#).

**Important information:** companies must follow Australian Consumer Law. If something goes wrong, talk to the company and try to fix it. Write down what the problem is and suggest a fair solution. If those options don't work, you can make a complaint to the [Consumer Protection](#) division of the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety.

If you're hiring a clan lab or meth contamination testing company:	Yes	No
Do they have a sampling report template? Ask to see one. It should include a risk assessment, a plan for where to take samples, an explanation of the results, and a remediation (clean-up) action plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do they have a remediation (clean-up) action plan template? Ask to see one. It should say if people can stay in the house while it's being cleaned, which rooms or items need to be cleaned or thrown away, and how the cleaning should be done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do they have a final or validation report template once the cleaning is completed? Ask to see one. It should say if all impacted areas were tested again, if more cleaning is needed, and if it's safe to live there.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask if the company uses the <a href="#">NIOSH Method 9111</a> for testing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make sure the company does not mix samples from different rooms (no field composites – see section 6.2.3 of the <a href="#">Guide for Testing and Remediation of Methamphetamine and Illicit Drug Residues in Residential Properties</a> for more information).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask if the company sends their samples to a NATA-accredited lab for analysis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the company staff have any formal qualifications or training? The lead scientist should normally have tertiary qualifications in occupational hygiene, forensic science, environmental science or environmental health.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you're hiring a clan lab or meth contamination cleaning company:	Yes	No
Make sure the cleaning company is not the same as the testing company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask if they use a special vacuum with a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter, cleaning liquids (like soapy water), and steam cleaning (if needed).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do they have a decontamination report template? Ask to see one. It should say what was cleaned, cleaning products used, how they were used, what was thrown away and why, and what was returned to the property.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make sure they follow the testing company's remediation (clean up) action plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the company staff have any accreditation or qualifications in drug decontamination?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Should you need any help or more information, please contact: <b>Environmental Health Directorate</b> Phone: (08) 9222 2000   Email: <a href="mailto:ehinfo@health.wa.gov.au">ehinfo@health.wa.gov.au</a>		

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