

What you should know about meth contamination in rental properties

by Adam Smith

The idea of your rental property being contaminated with methamphetamine is a scary thought. If you're a landlord, it's an issue that you need to be fully informed about.

One recent incident saw [a landlord facing a \\$140,000 bill](#) to repair the damage his tenants caused through methamphetamine use.

At Iron Bridge Property Management, we look after over 1,200 rental properties nationwide. So, we're well placed when it comes to offering advice about preventing meth contamination.



Make sure your tenants have a thorough background check

Take some extra time to ensure those living in your rental property are trustworthy:

- All prospective tenants should have a thorough background and credit check
- Request at least two referees and ensure you speak directly to each – don't rely on email

Background checking your prospective tenants is not always an easy process, so this is where professional property managers can really show their value.

Regularly inspect your rental property for meth contamination

Ideally you want to prevent the problem, instead of having to deal with it down the line:

- Regular inspections – ensure you, or a professional property manager, regularly inspect the home. We recommend this is done every three months.
- Check in with the neighbours – build up a great relationship with those living next door to your rental property. They may be the first people to spot any suspicious behaviour.

Even if a house has been used to manufacture meth, it can be *extremely* difficult to see or smell any evidence. Some obvious (but not always likely) warning signs include freshly painted areas, signs of chemical staining or chemicals being stockpiled.

Test your rental property for meth contamination between tenancies

Professional testing is the only way to accurately identify meth contamination. It can also pinpoint what residual levels are found in the home.

- Ensure your rental property is professionally tested before new tenants move in, and once they leave
- As a cost guide, an expert [MethSolutions baseline test](#) starts at \$189 + GST, depending on the size of the home.

Should the worst happen, it will provide you with some strong evidence. It is well worth the expense.

Check you're covered if meth contamination occurs in your rental property

- Check your insurance policy – Make sure your insurance provider covers you for the cost of decontamination and any loss of rental income
- Know your rights – [Tenancy Services](#) has some helpful advice, including how to add a methamphetamine testing clause into a new Tenancy Agreement.
- Avoid short-term leases – Short-term rentals are an ideal scenario for those looking to create a meth lab. Ignore the lure of quick turn-around tenancy options like Airbnb.

Sadly, the issue of meth contamination seems to be a growing one. While new standards on testing meth levels [are still to be confirmed](#), being pro-active and investing in well-timed professional testing is your best way to minimise the risks.

If you'd like some expert advice about meth contamination in rental properties, [talk to us today](#).