

# Farmer takes role in fight against meth

**Coloring the drug pink deters fertilizer thefts, helps locate anhydrous ammonia leaks and makes the user glow**

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*of The Associated Press*

**WICHITA, Kan.** - A high-tech twist to an old crime-solving technique has given farmers and communities a powerful new weapon in the fight against methamphetamine.

The product is the brainchild of an Illinois farmer who was frustrated in his efforts to stop thefts from his farm of the fertilizer anhydrous ammonia, a component of meth production. Also, two of his friends had died from meth use.

The farmer's idea was simple: Color the anhydrous ammonia fluorescent pink to deter thieves.

There were details to be worked out, though.

The additive had to withstand the cold, corrosive nature of anhydrous ammonia. It had to be safe for the environment, safe for crops and even safe around children.

And in the two years it took to develop GloTell, researchers at the University of Southern Illinois Carbondale found it did

much more than just stain anhydrous ammonia thieves pink.

The visible stain, even if washed off, was still detectable by ultraviolet light 24 to 72 hours later. As an added benefit, the additive helped farmers detect any tank leaks, said Truitt Clements, spokesman for Illinois-based GloTell Distributors LLC.

Best of all, the treated anhydrous ammonia rendered any meth made with it extremely difficult to dry and turned it an unbleachable pink. he said.

"Most people that are drug users, they like a clean-looking drug if they are going to ... put it in their body," Clements said. "We know the end-product is not pretty at all."

Snort it, and it turns the nose fluorescent pink. Inject

## METH: its littlest VICTIMS

It has been seven years since methamphetamine has taken a stronghold in Illinois, but researchers are just beginning to grasp the physical, psychological and emotional toll the drug will have on children for years to come. The Journal Star examines the effect meth has had on our children and what officials are now doing to step up protection of these innocent victims.

it, and the telltale pink shows up at the injection site, he said.

During product testing, GloTell was added to anhydrous ammonia tanks at some farms that had been having problems with meth thefts in Illinois, Kentucky and Indiana, Clements said. Within a week, the thefts stopped.

On Tuesday, GloTell was unveiled at the Illinois State Fair.

Next month, Virginia-based Royster-Clark Inc. will begin selling it at nearly 250 of its outlets around the nation under an exclusive distribution agreement with GloTell, said Lori Ann Peters, director of shared services for Royster-Clark.

GloTell will be sold in 30-ounce jugs. It takes about 1.5 ounces to treat a ton of anhydrous ammonia. A final price has not been set, Peters said.

Clements said the additive will likely add about \$9 per ton to the cost of anhydrous ammonia, which now costs about \$240 a ton.

The problem of anhydrous ammonia thefts has grown so much across the country that two years ago the industry formed a Fertilizer Industry Methamphetamine Task Force to deal with the problem, said Harriet Wegmeyer, spokeswoman for the Fertilizer Institute, an industry trade group.

To deal with the problem, some states have passed laws requiring locks on anhydrous ammonia tanks - with limited success.

Iowa State University also has been working on an additive that would make anhydrous ammonia unusable for meth production, Wegmeyer said. That product might debut next year, she said.

"All farmers want to do is go out and produce their crops and raise their families and do the best job they can," Clements said. "A lot of times they are fighting druggies and putting up fences and locks. They just want to go back to the production of agriculture."