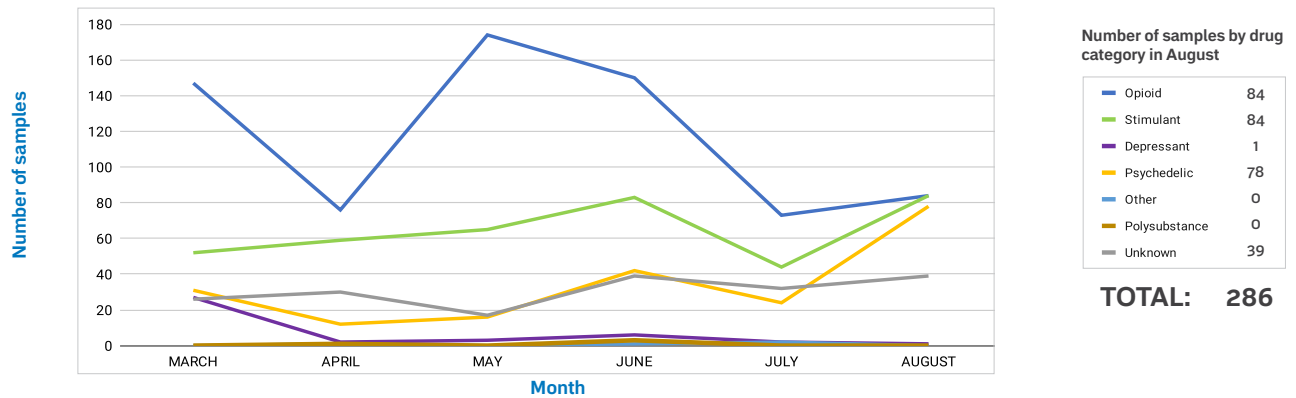


Key Findings

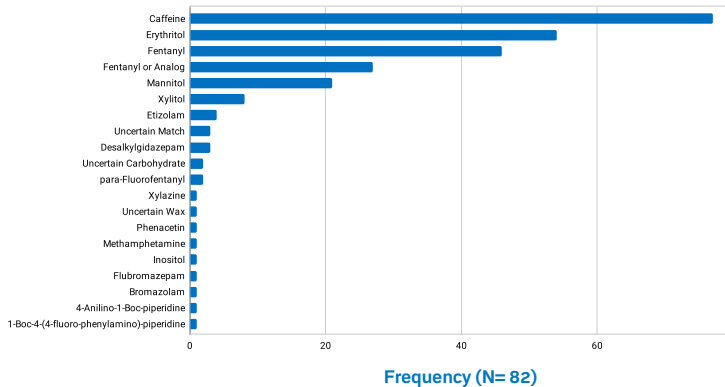
- There was an increase in total drug checks in Interior this month, due mostly to drug checking services provided at a festival that occurred in the region, where 89 samples were tested. A separate report on larger festivals in the region will be published later in the fall.
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the region increased from 61.6%, to 67.9% in August (57 of 84 samples). Trends may be hard to infer due the large geographic region, and the true rate may be higher than reported here as etizolam, a benzodiazepine-like substance, may be missed by drug checking technologies.
- Etizolam was the most frequent benzodiazepine detected by FTIR in the month of August, found present in 4 opioid samples.
- One alert was issued regarding a down sample that contained a high concentration of fentanyl and benzodiazepines (bromazolam and flubromazepam).
- Drug checking is available in several communities across the Interior Health region. For updated times and locations, visit <https://drugchecking.ca/>

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months

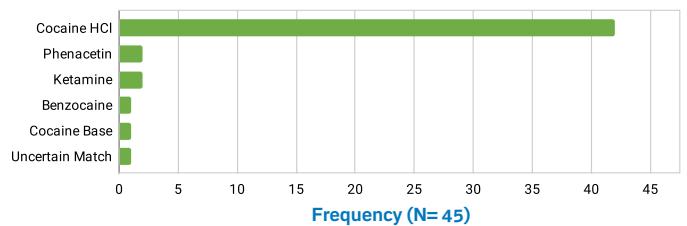


Components found in drug samples in August

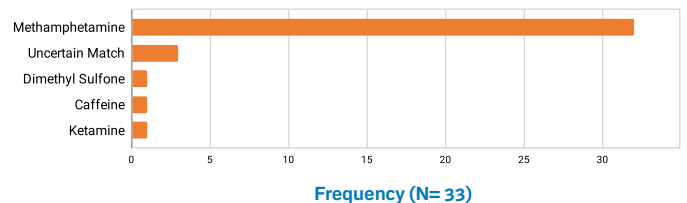
Components in opioids



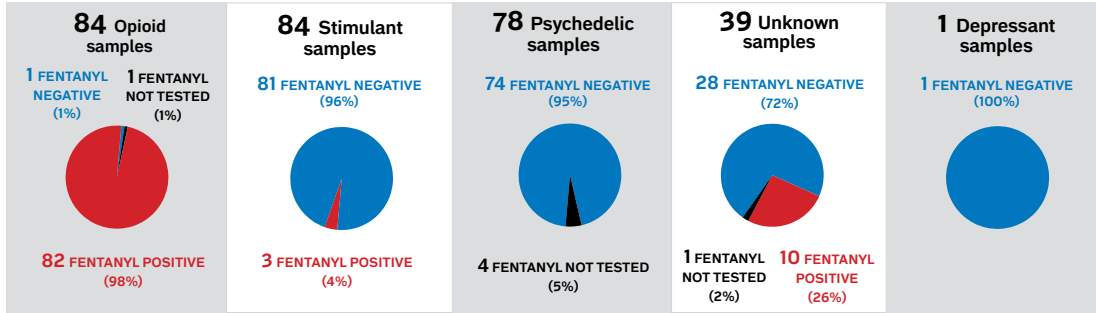
Components in cocaine



Components in methamphetamine



Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



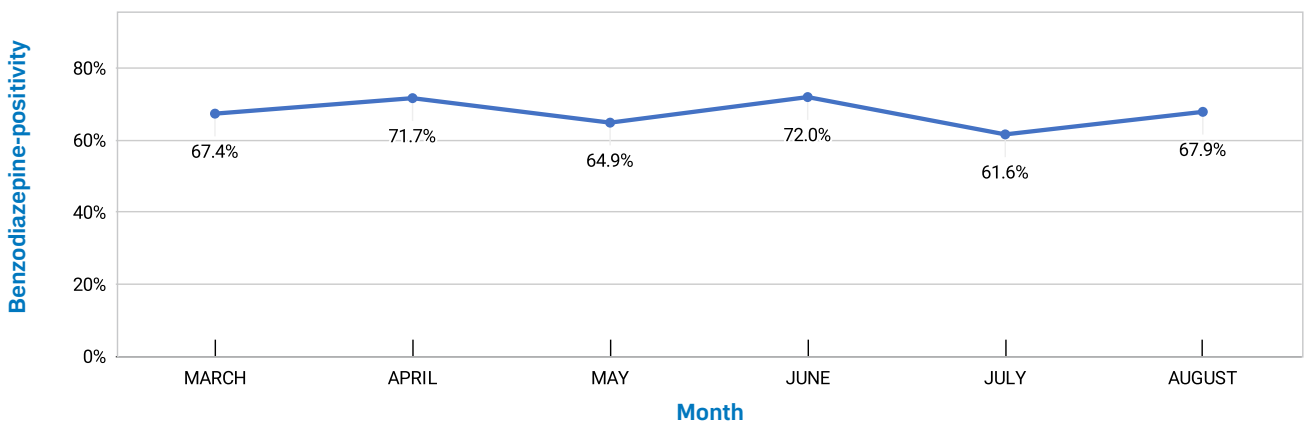
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
August 9 2022 Trail	Down/Fentanyl	Fentanyl, Bromazolam, Flubromazepam	Positive	Positive	Trail	Combination of high concentrations of fentanyl and benzodiazepines poses high risk of overdose not resolved by naloxone.

Health authorities and community organizations issue further toxic drug alerts from sources other than drug checking. See their respective websites or social media accounts for more alerts.

For information about public health alerts in the Interior Health region, please visit:
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/Leadership/MHQ/Pages/PHEmergency.aspx>

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the past 6 months



During the month of August, **67.9%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**57 samples of 84 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The results presented here are derived from both of these technologies and are presumptive until confirmed by a laboratory.

Number of drugs checks at each site

Organization	City/Town	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS	Nelson	20
	Cranbrook	48
ASK Wellness	Kamloops	41
	Penticton	20
	Princeton	2
	Electric Love Festival	89
UBCO Hart	Kelowna	31
	Vernon	24
Total		286

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Psychedelic

78 Samples Tested



Matched: 72
Did not match: 6

EXPECTED DRUG:

Stimulant

84 Samples Tested



Matched: 81
Did not match: 3

EXPECTED DRUG:

Depressant

1 Samples Tested



Matched: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Opioid

84 Samples Tested



Matched: 78
Did not match: 6

EXPECTED DRUG:

Unknown

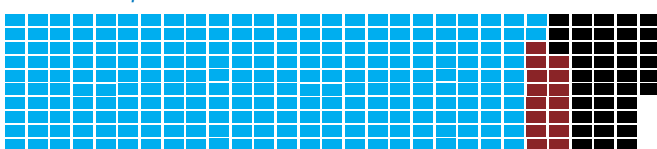
39 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 39

Total

286 Samples Tested



Matched: 232
Did not match: 15
Match not determined: 39

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents

Depressant August include: benzodiazepines, etizolam, GHB, hypnotics

Opioid August include: "down," heroin, fentanyl, pharmaceutical opioids

Polysubstance includes: cross-category mixtures

Psychedelic August include: MDMA and related, 2C-family, tryptamines, ketamine, LSD

Stimulant August include: methamphetamine, "speed," cocaine and crack cocaine, cathinones

Unknown includes: samples where the individual was unable to identify an expected substance - this includes found samples.

Number of opioid samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Fentanyl

39 Samples Tested



Matched: 38

Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Heroin

1 Samples Tested



Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

41 Samples Tested



Matched: 40

Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Fentanyl and Heroin

1 Samples Tested



Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Pharmaceutical

2 Samples Tested



Did not match: 2

Total

84 Samples Tested



Matched: 78

Did not match: 6

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents. 'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Data represented here are collected from our partner sites across the province. Drug samples are tested using the Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometer in combination with fentanyl test strips and benzodiazepine test strips.

There is 5% fentanyl detection limit on the FTIR spectrometer (McCrae, 2019), and a drug check on any given sample consists of both the FTIR and BTNX fentanyl immunoassay test strip testing done in combination. When applicable, BTNX benzodiazepine immunoassay test strips are also used.

BCCSU gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following partners: