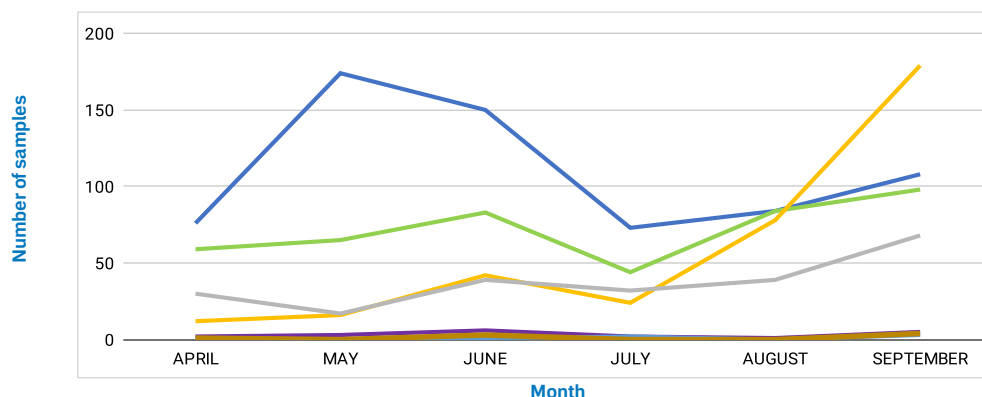


Key Findings

- There was an increase in total drug checks in Interior during September, due mostly to drug checking services provided at a small festival where 210 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 decreased from 67.9% to 50.0% in September (54 of 108 samples). Trends may be hard to infer due the large geographic region, and the true rate may be higher than reported here benzodiazepines, and benzodiazepine-like substances like etizolam, may be missed by drug checking technologies.
- Etizolam was the most frequent benzodiazepine detected by FTIR in the month of September, found present in 4 opioid samples.
- 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



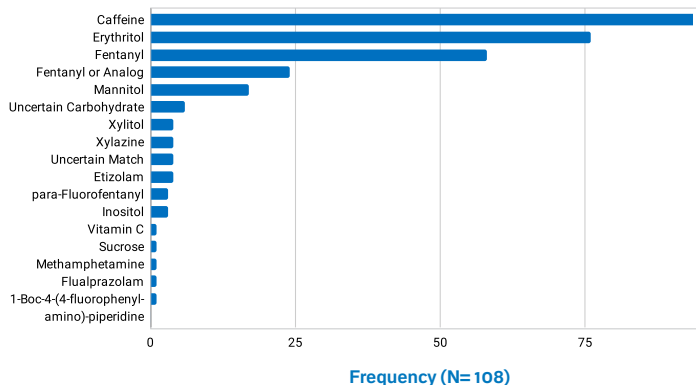
Number of samples by drug category in September

Opioid	108
Stimulant	98
Depressant	5
Psychedelic	179
Other	3
Polysubstance	4
Unknown	68

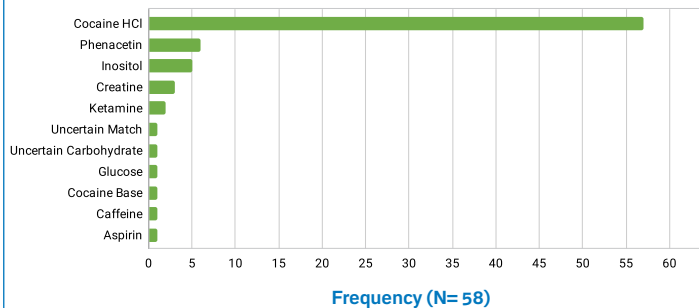
TOTAL: 465

Components found in drug samples in September

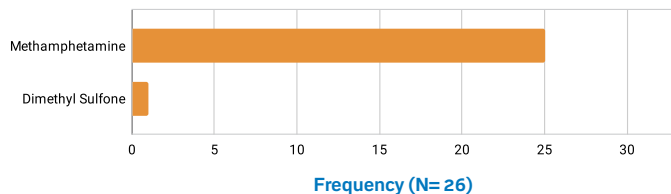
Components in opioids



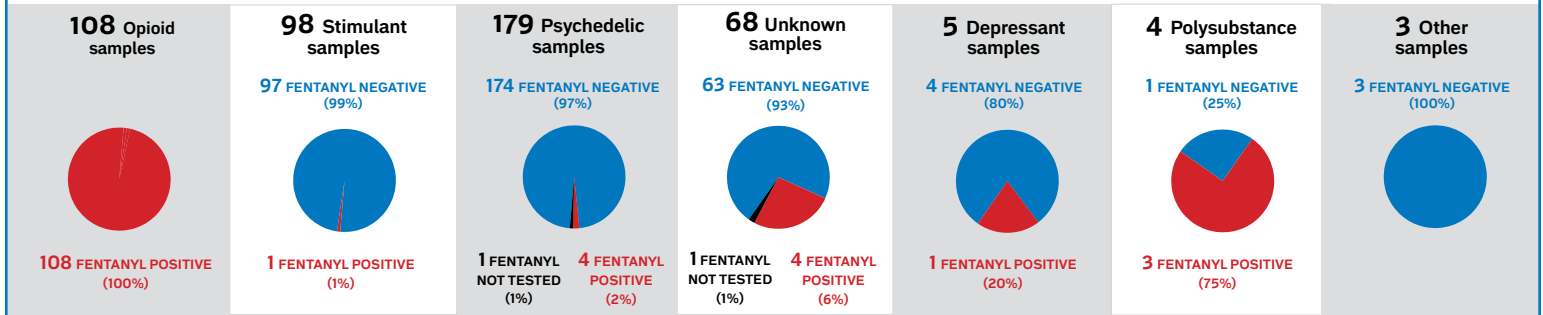
Components in cocaine



Components in methamphetamine



Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

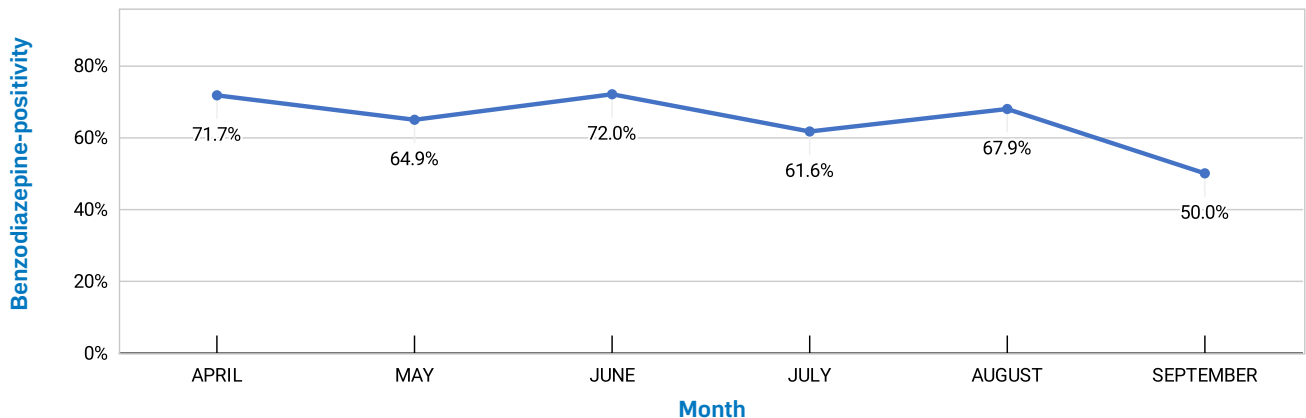


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
September 8 2022 Nelson	Down/Fentanyl	Fentanyl, Fluorofentanyl, Bromazolam	Positive	Positive	Nelson	Combination of fentanyl/fentanyl analogue and benzodiazepine poses high risk of overdose, fatal overdose, and loss of consciousness
<p>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.</p>						

For information about public health alerts in the Interior Health region, please visit:
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/alerts>

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



During the month of September, **50.0%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**54 samples of 108 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	Castlegar	2
	Cranbrook	43
	Grand Forks	5
	Nelson	34
	Trail	3
	Wicked Woods Festival	210
ASK Wellness	Kamloops	1
	Merritt	1
	Penticton	49
UBCO Hart	Kelowna	88
	Vernon	29
Total		465

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG: Psychedelic

179 Samples Tested



Matched: 157
Did not match: 20
Match not determined: 2

EXPECTED DRUG: Stimulant

98 Samples Tested



Matched: 95
Did not match: 2
Match not determined: 1

EXPECTED DRUG: Depressant

5 Samples Tested



Matched: 2
Did not match: 3

EXPECTED DRUG: Opioid

108 Samples Tested



Matched: 106
Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG: Other

3 Samples Tested



Matched: 3

EXPECTED DRUG: Polysubstance

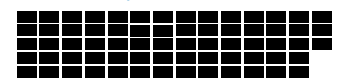
4 Samples Tested



Matched: 2
Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG: Unknown

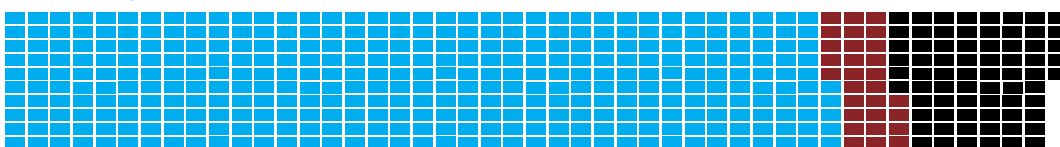
68 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 68

Total

465 Samples Tested



Matched: 365
Did not match: 29
Match not determined: 71

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

Depressant September include: benzodiazepines, etizolam, GHB, hypnotics

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

Polysubstance includes: cross-category mixtures

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

Stimulant September 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

58 Samples Tested



Matched: 58

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

48 Samples Tested



Matched: 48

EXPECTED DRUG:

Heroin

2 Samples Tested



Did not match: 2

Total

108 Samples Tested



Matched: 106

Did not match: 2

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: