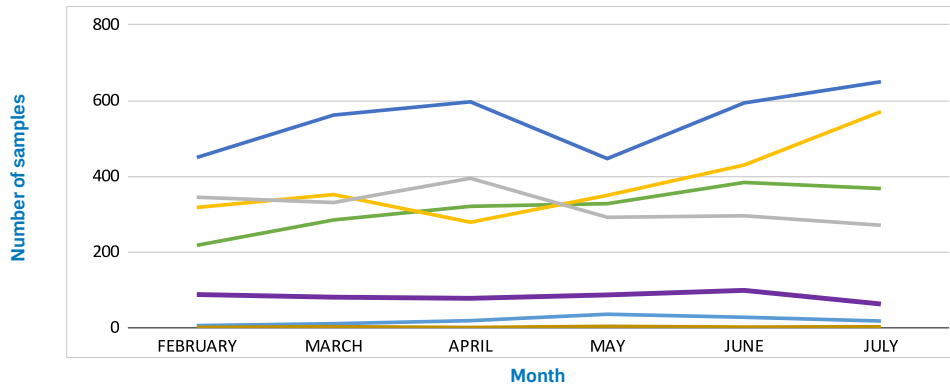


## Key Findings

- In July, a total of 1,944 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Vancouver Coastal region, the highest number of samples recorded in the region to date. Increases occurred primarily in the psychedelic category, typically seen in the summer months, and in the opioid category.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and test strip decreased from 33.5% to 30.2% in July (196 of 650 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were found in concentrations high enough to be detected by FTIR in 7.9% of unregulated opioid samples checked (45 of 568 samples), with bromazolam most frequently detected (38 samples).
- Fluorofentanyl was detected in 37.9% of unregulated opioid samples (215 of 568 samples), whereas fentanyl was detected in 44.2% (251 samples).
- Services in Vancouver Coastal are rapidly expanding! Services are now available at Whistler Community Services Society (8000 Nesters Rd, Whistler), LIFT Community Services (4752 Joyce Ave, Powell River), and in Tla'amin Nation (5160 Highway 101, Powell River).

### Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



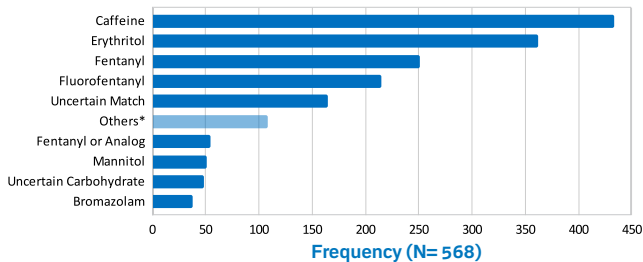
Number of samples by drug category in July

Opioid	650
Stimulant	368
Depressant	63
Psychedelic	571
Other	18
Polysubstance	3
Unknown	271

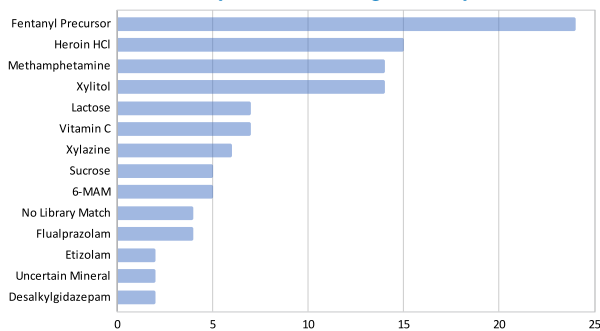
**TOTAL: 1,944**

### Components found in drug samples in July

#### Components in unregulated opioids

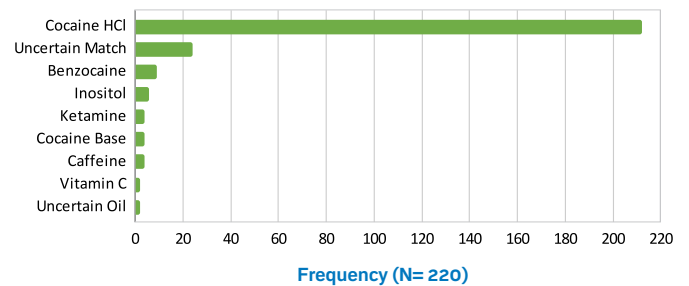


#### Other components in unregulated opioids



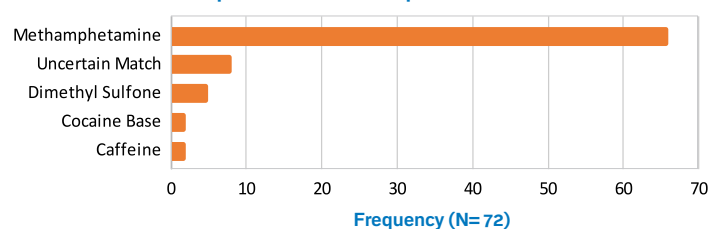
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: bromazepam, methylamine, inositol, sodium bicarbonate, sorbitol, dimethyl sulfone, uncertain oil, cocaine base, fructose.

#### Components in cocaine



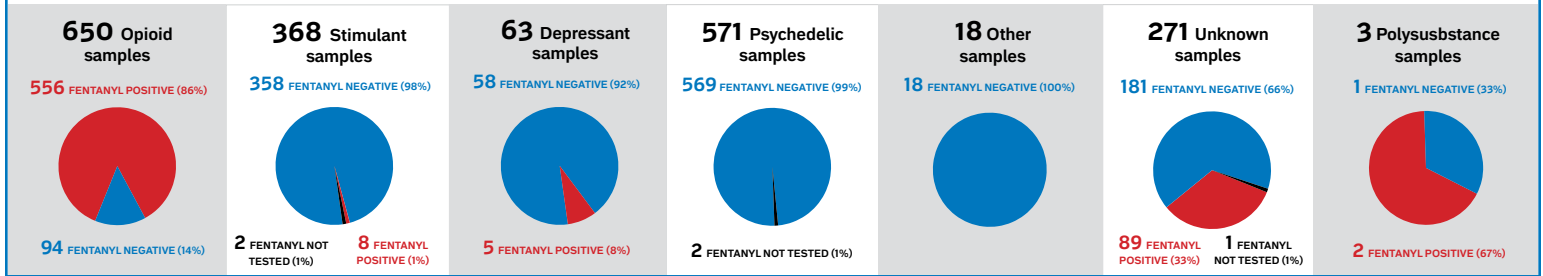
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: MDMA, mannitol, oleamide, phenacetin, benzyl alcohol, glutamine, levamisole.

#### Components in methamphetamine



Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: erythritol, fentanyl, MDMA, methylamine, uncertain carbohydrate, uncertain mineral, uncertain oil, fluorofentanyl.

## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



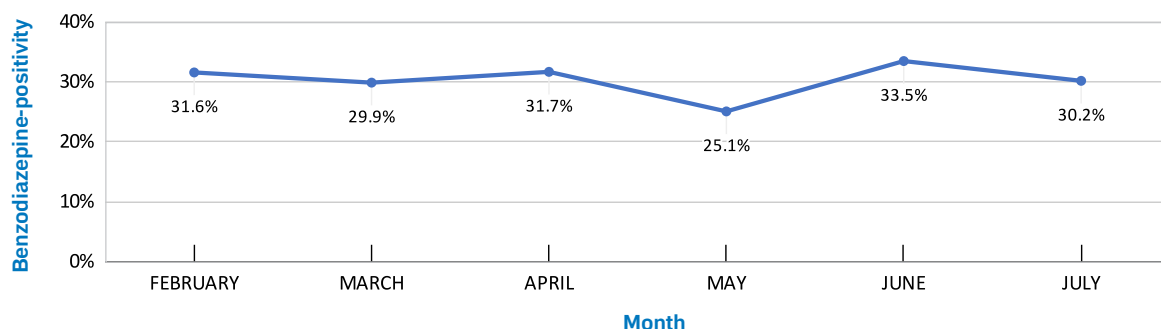
## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
July 5, 2023 DTES Vancouver	Crack Cocaine	Crack Cocaine, Uncertain Match	Negative	Positive	DTES Vancouver	Brown resin chunks sold as crack cocaine in the DTES of Vancouver causing sedation and overdose tested positive for benzos.
July 6, 2023 Vancouver	Alprazolam	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Xylazine, Uncertain Oil	Negative	Negative	Vancouver	White tablet sold as alprazolam, also known as Xanax, in Vancouver tested positive for xylazine and negative for benzos.
July 14, 2023 DTES Vancouver	Oxycodone	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Fentanyl, Xylazine	Positive	Negative	DTES Vancouver	Light blue pressed pill with imprint "M" on one side and "30" on the other sold as oxycodone in the DTES of Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl and xylazine.
July 21, 2023 DTES Vancouver	Fentanyl	Caffeine, Erythritol, Fentanyl, Xylazine	Positive	Negative	DTES Vancouver	Dark blue chunks tested positive for fentanyl and xylazine, an animal analgesic. Sample tested in the DTES.
July 28, 2023 DTES Vancouver	Oxycodone	Acetaminophen, Oxycodone, Uncertain Carbohydrate	Negative	Positive	DTES Vancouver	White pressed tablets of varied thickness with imprint "TEC" on one side and a single score mark on the other sold as oxycodone in the DTES of Vancouver tested positive for oxycodone, acetaminophen, and benzos.

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.

To receive drug contamination alerts, text "alert" to (236) 999-DOPE (3673)

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



During the month of July, **30.2%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**196 samples of 650 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 and hours at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Get Your Drugs Tested (Vancouver)	1,566
Insite (Vancouver)	308
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	53
Tla'amin Nation (Powell River)	5
WCSS (Whistler)	12
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,944</b>

## Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Matched	Did Not Match	Match Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	622	18	10	650
Stimulant	337	30	1	368
Depressant	38	24	1	63
Psychedelic	552	18	1	571
Other	12	3	3	18
Polysubstance	3	0	0	3
Unknown	0	0	271	271
<b>Total</b>	<b>1564</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>1944</b>

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

**Depressant include:**  
benzodiazepines, etizolam,  
GHB, hypnotics

**Opioid include:**  
"down", heroin, fentanyl  
(unregulated opioids), and  
pharmaceutical opioids

**Polysubstance includes:**  
cross-category mixtures

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

**Stimulant 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	Matched	Did Not Match	Match Not Determined	Samples Tested
Fentanyl	317	2	0	319
Heroin	4	2	0	6
Fentanyl and Heroin	2	0	0	2
Other Opioid	0	1	0	1
Down	236	6	0	242
Pharmaceutical	51	5	10	66
Opium	12	2	0	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>650</b>

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:

