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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cleaning Up Meth Labs

A local nonprofit begins a meth lab clean up project unlike any other in the nation.

Littleton----- Instances of methamphetamine (meth) trafficking, production and abuse in the United States have a devastating impact on communities.

The ingredients used to manufacture meth are readily available and inexpensive, leading increasingly to household “meth labs” or “table top” drug manufacturers.

The chemicals used to make meth are toxic and the vapors produced during production permeate the walls and carpets of houses and buildings, making them uninhabitable. Cleaning up these sites requires specialized training, can be very expensive, and in many cases results in total demolition.

In many instances, these houses are rental properties and innocent property owners are left to pick up the pieces.

A local nonprofit, the Colorado Brownfields Foundation (CBF), is trying to find a way to prevent total loss for property owners while cleaning up the property and re-introducing it into the community as an asset.

CBF recently took title to a meth lab in Trinidad, CO and is working with local officials, government agencies and the community to remediate this environmentally hazardous property. The cleaned site will be redeveloped with affordable housing through a partnership with a local Trinidad affordable housing agency.

Due to the levels of contamination, this property will need to be completely demolished and the waste properly disposed of. The costs of this project outweigh the value of the property and wouldn't be possible without the intervention of CBF and state agencies.

“In the private sector this type of a project would never happen. For us, the value of this property needs to be assessed not only as a piece of real estate, but as a public benefit. This property is part of the community and has neighbors who have suffered because of the stigma and crime that has revolved around this home,” explains Jesse Silverstein, Executive Director of CBF. “The removal of this property increases surrounding property values and the long term potential of this neighborhood, while cleaning up a health hazard. A new homeowner, particularly one very appreciative of having a home, will add stability and pride of ownership this neighborhood”.

CBF plans on documenting this project as a case study for other communities dealing with meth lab issues.

For more information, visit www.ColoradoBrownfieldsFoundation.org/meth

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