Investigators with the Avery County joint Drug Task Force and deputies with the Avery County Sheriff's Office report the discovered the makings of two methamphetamine labs in Elk Park and Newland last week. Tuesday, the officers located the materials necessary to manufacture meth in what officers called a "Shake and Bake" lab. Materials included drink bottles, Sudafed blister packs, lithium battery wrappers, fire starter fluid and rock salt.

In the first location, such materials were found at the residence of Eric Hicks, 48, of Elk Park, with the recent purchase of Sudafed and allergy medications containing pseudoephedrine reported through the Meth Check state program. Hicks was arrested by deputies with the sheriff's office and was placed under a $100,000 secured bond with a court date on October 25th. The second location was related and at a residence in Linville, where Deputies discovered the materials at the residence of Jennifer McCoury, 38. The Avery Sheriff/Municipal Drug task force had been watching for Sudafed and other pseudoephedrine purchases from McCoury and found several bottles and materials of past methamphetamine one pot labs. McCoury is thought to be hiding in Tennessee and warrants are outstanding for her arrest. Anyone with any information on Jennifer McCoury's location is asked to notify the Avery County Sheriff's Office or Crimestoppers at 828-737-0125. Information may lead to a reward for the apprehension of McCoury.

In the third location, officers gained access to the home of William Carpenter, 60, on Miller's Gap Highway, and found three other individuals in the home, Richard Lowery, 47; Destiny Roark, 22; and Corey Brown, 24. After receiving permission to search the premises, deputies discovered a large quantity of drain cleaner, muriatic acid, and a number of pseudoephedrine blister packs. The four were arrested and charged with Manufacture of Methamphetamines and Possession of Precursor Chemicals Used in the Manufacture of Methamphetamines. All four are currently being held at the Avery County Detention Center on $100,000 secured bonds with a court dates Thursday. Deputies called in the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation's Clandestine Laboratory response team to document and dispose of the labs.