



Press Release

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Synthetic Cannabinoids Now a Schedule 1 Drug

District Health agency classify synthetic Cannabinoids as a schedule 1 substance to decrease use among District Youth

(Washington, DC) - In an effort to protect and promote the health and safety of District of Columbia residents, the District of Columbia Department of Health has partnered with sister agencies and experts to update the regulations regarding synthetic cannabinoids and derivatives of the drug to classify the substances as a Schedule I drug, substance, or chemical. Schedule I drugs are the most dangerous category of all the drug schedules indicating a potentially severe psychological or physical dependence.

Synthetic cannabinoids, commonly known as *synthetic marijuana*, K2, or *Spice*, are often sold in retail outlets, gas stations and corner stores throughout the District as herbal incense, potpourri, bath salts, or jewelry cleaner.

“In an effort to curb emerging synthetic drugs and protect children and teens, the District has developed one of the most comprehensive bans on harmful synthetic drugs” said Dr. Garcia, Director of Health DOH. ***“These substances are gaining increased prevalence among youth and unsuspecting adults. We must be diligent and proactive if we are to stop the flow of harmful drugs to the marketplace and finding its way to our children.”***

The District is taking a multi-pronged approach to address the threat posed by synthetic drugs. Earlier this year, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs published regulations authorizing the agency to fine or take action against the license of a business selling products with the marketing characteristics of synthetic drugs.

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The new regulations limit the ability of chemists to simply alter a substance by one or two molecules to create a new 'non-regulated' substance, something that was not covered by the existing regulations. None of the synthetic substances are currently approved for medical use in the United States.

Administrative, civil and criminal sanctions apply to the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, importing and exporting of the synthetic cannabinoids and derivations of the drug that include fines and imprisonment. For more information please visit <http://doh.dc.gov/>.

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