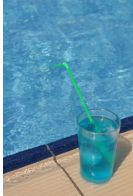


FDA Should Block Approval of Powdered Alcohol: NY Senator



U.S. Senator Charles Schumer of New York is asking the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to prevent federal approval of the powdered alcohol product called Palcohol.

He said it could become "the Kool-Aid of teen binge drinking," The Wall Street Journal reports.

The federal Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) approved labels for Palcohol last month, but then said the approval was a mistake. Lipsmark, the company that makes Palcohol, says it will resubmit an application.

Legislators in Minnesota and Vermont have introduced measures that would ban powdered alcohol.

Lipsmark, the company that makes Palcohol, says it plans to offer powdered alcohol in six varieties, including rum, vodka, Cosmopolitan, Mojito, Powderita and Lemon Drop. According to the company, a package of Palcohol weighs about an ounce and can fit into a pocket. It warns people not to snort the powder.

The FDA has the power to overrule the TTB in regulating alcohol products when there are significant health concerns, Schumer said. "Palcohol can be easily concealed and brought into concerts, school dances and sporting events, it can be sprinkled on food and can even be snorted," he said in a news release. "Given that the federal TTB can only judge and approve new alcohol products based on labeling and taxation, it's clear the FDA must utilize their authority to intervene when alcohol products create significant health risks — as they did with Four Loko — and stop this potentially deadly product in its tracks."

In 2010, the FDA notified four companies — Charge Beverages Corporation, New Century Brewing, Phusion Projects Inc., and United Brands Company, Inc. — that the addition of caffeine to their alcohol drinks was unapproved and unsafe, effectively making the manufacture and distribution of caffeinated alcoholic beverages such as Four Loko illegal.