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Experts Concerned Recreational Marijuana Laws Will Allow Sale of Hash

Substance abuse experts are concerned that the new recreational marijuana law in Washington state will allow the sale of hash, a strong and potentially dangerous marijuana extract, the Associated Press reports.

While the law bans the sale of pure hash and hash oil, it does not specifically outlaw sale of concentrated marijuana, the article notes. Derek Franklin, President of Washington Association for Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention, told the AP his group is concerned some hash products will end up in the black market in neighboring states.

The Washington Liquor Control Board, which drafted rules about the sale of marijuana, decided hash and hash oil can be used in "marijuana-infused products," even if the product only contains a tiny amount of a non-marijuana product, such as olive oil or glycerin. People would be allowed to purchase up to 16 ounces of marijuana-infused oils in solid form or 72 ounces in liquid form.

Hash oils can cost between $40 and $60 or more per gram, the article notes.

"When we set the 72-ounce limit, we were thinking about marijuana juice or tea, not a high-potency extract like that," Alison Holcomb, the Seattle lawyer who primarily drafted Washington's law, told the AP. She said state legislators can institute new limits on marijuana concentrate sales before state-licensed marijuana stores open early next year.

They also have the option of changing the law to allow the sale of pure hash and hash oil. Colorado, which also legalized the sale of recreational marijuana, will allow the sale of hash and hash oil.