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NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.

DEA Continues to Act Against Synthetic Drugs

Agency Targets Four Substances Used to Make So-Called "Fake Pot" and "Bath Salts".

Recently, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) published a Final Rule to permanently control 3,4-methylenedioxy-N-methylcathinone (methylone) and a Notice of Intent to temporarily schedule three synthetic cannabinoids.

The first of two notices published in the Federal Register is a Final Rule permanently placing methylone, a synthetic stimulant drug that has been encountered in falsely marketed "bath salt" products, into Schedule I under the Controlled Substances Act, the most restrictive category that is reserved for unsafe, highly abused substances with no accepted medical use.

Methylone is abused by individuals for its psychoactive effects, and this abuse has had an adverse effect on public health and safety, including death. DEA temporarily scheduled methylone on October 21, 2011 upon finding it posed an imminent hazard to public safety. In addition the United States Department of Health and Human Services concluded that it should be controlled. On October 17, 2012, DEA proposed to make its Schedule I status permanent, taking steps that conclude with the Final Rule.

Over the past two years, synthetic stimulants sold under the guise of "bath salts" or "plant food" has become increasingly popular, particularly among teens and young adults, and is sold at a variety of retail outlets and over the Internet.

However, they have not been approved by the FDA for human consumption or for medical use. Marketed under names such as "Ivory Wave", "Purple Wave", "Vanilla Sky" or "Bliss," these products are comprised of substances perceived as mimics of cocaine, LSD, MDMA, and/or methamphetamine. Users have reported impaired perception, reduced motor control, disorientation, extreme paranoia, and violent episodes. The long-term physical and psychological effects of these substances and their associated products are unknown but potentially severe.

The second Federal Register Notice published is a Notice of Intent to temporarily control three

synthetic cannabinoids (UR-144, XLR11, and AKB48) often seen in falsely marketed "herbal incense" products.

DEA has taken action upon finding these three substances pose an imminent hazard to public safety. This action will become effective upon publishing a Final Order to temporarily control these substances as Schedule I substances for up to two years, with the possibility of a one-year extension.

Over the past three years, smoke-able herbal blends are marketed under the guise of being "legal" and have become increasingly popular, particularly among teens and young adults. These products consist of plant material that has been laced with a substance that mimics THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, and are sold at a variety of retail outlets, in head shops and over the Internet. These substances have not been approved by the FDA for human consumption or for medical use.

The long-term physical and psychological effects of these substances and their associated products are unknown but potentially severe.

Source: http://www.justice.gov/dea/divisions/hq/2013/hq041213.shtml