

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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NEWS RELEASE

Alabama bans possession, manufacture and distribution of so-called 'bath salts'

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two dangerous chemicals which are being marketed as "bath salts" are being added to the Alabama Controlled Substances List by emergency rule. This means that possession, manufacture, or distribution of these substances is now illegal.

The Alabama Department of Public Health received information from members of the Legislature, the law enforcement community, and the public about dangers from these synthetic substances. These substances have been purchased over the counter at convenience stores and gas stations or purchased online.

"The emergency rule is effective immediately," said State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson. "These powdered stimulants pose a serious health threat and have a great potential for abuse."

Attorney General Luther Strange said, "Alabama is working with the local law enforcement and local district attorneys to protect the public from the dangers of these synthetic substances. These substances are illegal drugs, and those who sell or make them will be prosecuted. I appreciate Dr. Williamson and his staff for their research to address this potential substance abuse problem quickly."

These drugs create a methamphetamine-like high and sometimes violent behavior in users. The chemicals contained are methylenedioxypropylamphetamine (MDPV) and mephedrone. MDPV is considered by the Drug Enforcement Agency Office of Diversion Control to be a chemical analogue of the controlled substance Cathinone. The substance mephedrone is considered by DEA to be a chemical analogue of the controlled substance Methcathinone. Both of these substances are listed in the DEA and the Alabama Controlled Substances Lists as Schedule I (f), Stimulants.

Users of these drugs have been treated for conditions that include extreme paranoia, hallucinations, delusions, agitation, hypertension, chest pain and headache.

Tommy Smith, Alabama District Attorneys Association president, said, "Alabama district attorneys applaud this concerted effort between the Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange, the Alabama Department of Health led by Dr. Williamson, the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences and all Alabama law enforcement to address this newest threat to the health and safety of Alabama.

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“The local district attorneys have been inundated with concerns regarding the use of ‘bath salts,’ which are really two synthetic drugs used in the manufacture of *other* illegal drugs. They are sold under such names as Ivory Wave, Red Dove, Bliss and Vanilla Sky.”

Smith continued, “It seems that every time we turn our head around, a new dangerous drug or ‘narcotic of concern’ has emerged on the scene to pose a threat to our citizens, and all too often, those who would profit from the sale of these drugs market them with ‘feel good’ names or as a harmless ‘high.’ But we in law enforcement and in the health community know the truth. It is time this practice stopped, and with the partnership here today we can quickly make a difference with this new threat.”

Once again Alabama is in the lead in matters concerning the protection of our citizens, joining Florida, Louisiana and North Dakota in the declaration of these substances as controlled.

Attorney General Luther Strange, Dr. Williamson and public health, the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences and all the Alabama district attorneys have worked together to make this enforcement happen.

Notice of this emergency scheduling will be made to Alabama district attorneys and the law enforcement community.

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