

## **DEA Announces Emergency Ban on 'Bath Salts'**

The Drug Enforcement Administration said today it will use its emergency authority to ban chemicals used in legal synthetic drugs known as "bath salts", calling the chemicals an "imminent hazard" to the public.

"This imminent action by the DEA demonstrates that there is no tolerance for those who manufacture, distribute, or sell these drugs anywhere in the country, and that those who do will be shut down, arrested, and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," DEA Administrator Michele M. Leonhart said in a. "DEA has made it clear we will not hesitate to use our emergency scheduling authority to control these dangerous chemicals that pose a significant and growing threat to our nation."

In June, an ABC News "20/20" investigation found that despite being linked to multiple deaths, "bath salts" have been sold across the country with little to no oversight, sometimes to teens.

The DEA describes the so-called "bath salts", which have nothing in common with products long-used in bathing, as a sort of imitation cocaine or LSD – a substance that while legal, has not been approved by the FDA for human consumption and has been linked to violent, sometimes deadly outbursts by users. Varieties of "bath salts" are sold under different labels in corner stores across the U.S. as well as online and have prompted thousands of calls to Poison Control nationwide.

"They're selling time bombs," Louisiana Poison Control Center Director Dr. Mark Ryan said in the course of the ABC News investigation. "We've had some people show up who are complaining of chest pains so severe that they think they're having a heart attack. They think they're dying... They have extreme paranoia. They're having hallucinations. They see things, they hear things, monsters, demons, aliens."

Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY), proposed a national ban on the chemicals used in bath salts in February. Thirty-three states already have measures to control the substance.

"I am pleased the DEA has finally heeded our call to ban these drugs by making them illegal controlled substances. While this is a solid first step, we need to ensure that these drugs stay off the market for good," Schumer said. "I will push to permanently ban these drugs until the threat of this scourge is removed from our neighborhoods, our schools, and from store counters across the country."

The DEA emergency ban will take effect in 30 days and will make it illegal to possess or sell mephedrone, methylenedioxypropylamphetamine (MDPV) and methylone -- all key ingredients for "bath salts" -- or any products which contain the chemicals for one year while the DEA works with the Department of Health and Human Services to "further study whether these chemicals should be permanently controlled." **DEA Announces Emergency Ban on 'Bath Salts'**

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