

LEGISLATIVE FACTS

On April 24, 2013, Senate Bill 294 was signed into law by Governor Rick Scott which permanently designated 26 synthetic substances as Schedule I drugs. During previous legislation, Governor Scott signed into law HB 1175 which authorized the addition of 92 chemicals found in illicit synthetic substances.

These chemicals are now considered Schedule I controlled substances, meaning they have a high potential for abuse and have no currently accepted medical use in the U.S. This action makes possessing and/or selling these illicit substances or products that contain them a felony in Florida.



If any of these products are encountered, please contact your local law enforcement agency.



Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Service • Integrity • Respect • Quality

Gerald M. Bailey
Commissioner

2331 Phillips Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32308
(800) 342-0820
www.fdle.state.fl.us



ATTORNEY GENERAL
PAM BONDI

FLORIDA OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

PL-01 The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
(850) 414-3300
www.myfloridalegal.com

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WHAT ARE ILLICIT SYNTHETIC SUBSTANCES?



Florida Department of
Law Enforcement

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Under the misconception that illicit synthetic substances are a marijuana substitute, individuals are smoking the substances assuming the effects will mimic marijuana.

Many of these products contain one or more synthetic compounds which interact with the brain similarly to the primary psychoactive constituent of tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, in marijuana.

Although the synthetic compound binds to the same neurological receptors as THC, it does not result in the same physiological and psychological effects. Once users experience the mimicking psychological effects, they may experience unexpected and unpleasant physiological effects.



EFFECTS OF USING ILLICIT SYNTHETIC SUBSTANCES

Those who turn to illicit synthetic substances to get the high associated with other drugs like marijuana, ecstasy, cocaine, and amphetamines may suffer adverse side effects to include:

Agitation

Headaches

Dangerous hallucinations

Vomiting

Seizures

Elevated blood pressure

Severe paranoia

Aggression

Loss of consciousness

According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, in 2012, Florida poison control centers received 5,202 calls involving exposures to illicit synthetic substances, as compared to the 2,906 calls received in 2010. Many of these users ended up in the emergency room.

Additionally, the cumulative effects of illicit synthetic substances are unknown. In the same way that tobacco may contribute to cancer, and some over the counter medications may contribute to liver and/or kidney damage over time, use of illicit synthetic substances may also contribute to future chronic disease.

Synthetic drug manufacturers and distributors are utilizing numerous packaging styles and product names to market these psychoactive substances (often targeting youth), which are then sold in local convenience stores, specialty smoke shops, and online.

