

Warning Issued on Synthetic Marijuana

Iowa's Office of Drug Control Policy issued an alert to Iowans about a substance that some are referring to as fake or synthetic marijuana, sold under names such as "Spice" or "K2." This substance has already played a role in the death of one Iowa teen, and it is expected that legislation will be introduced in 2011 to ban the substance or make it a controlled substance.

Right now, this substance can be sold to a person of at least 18 years of age, similar to incense. This synthetic marijuana is a combination of various compounds and serves the purpose of stimulating the same areas of the brain as marijuana. However, unlike marijuana, some effects of the synthetic marijuana include anxiety, panic attacks, hallucinations, and seizures.

The Office of Drug Control Policy feels that the synthetic marijuana has enough harmful effects that it should not be readily available. If the legislature were to make it a controlled substance, the substance would not be as available as it is today, but not banned.