

Bath Salts Banned in Washington...Not The Kind You May Think

Local News

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - The state Board of Pharmacy has filed emergency rules intended to slow the rising use of so-called "bath salts" as substitutes for cocaine and methamphetamine. The rule was filed April 15 and was effective immediately. The board's action followed a report showing that the Washington State Poison Center is getting a growing number of calls about people who've ingested these products. Half of these calls came from hospital emergency rooms. According to the Poison Center, there's been a three-fold increase (to 39) already this year over the total number of "bath salt" ingestion calls in 2010. Sold widely as "bath salts," products such as Ivory Wave, Red Dove, Zoom, and others contain stimulants called substituted cathinones that affect behavior and judgment. These bath salts have a high potential for abuse and are dangerous to human health. They're typically inhaled, similar to snorting cocaine. Bath salt products are sold widely in smoke shops, head shops, and online.

On April 7, the board unanimously voted to write emergency rules to ban sale and possession of substituted cathinone products in Washington; the rules were filed April 15. The board voted to classify the products as Schedule I controlled substances in Washington, making it illegal to make, sell, deliver, or possess them. Idaho and Oregon have also banned these substances. A state rule banning these substances is an effective tool for local law enforcement. The ban is also intended as a deterrent to substituted cathinone use and sale in our state. [The Washington State Board of Pharmacy website \(www.doh.wa.gov\)](http://www.doh.wa.gov) has more information.