

Synthetic drug a problem for Kansas?

Last Update: 11/18 10:28 am

WICHITA, Kansas – It looks like marijuana and supposedly works like it too. But the herbs are perfectly legal for now. But some law enforcement wants that changed and at least one Kansas legislator is vowing to make that happen.



The drug is called K-2 and just started making waves in Kansas. When law enforcement near Lawrence and Kansas City started speaking up about it KSN investigated and found that K-2 is merely the tip of the iceberg when it comes to so-called "legal drugs".

"According to about 10 to 15 interviews I've done, it's supposed to be more potent than most versions of marijuana," said Deputy Chris Farkes with the Johnson County Sheriff's Department.

Wichita police say they haven't yet run across K-2, though KSN found one Wichita store selling it. In fact, the store's employees say they can't keep it in stock. Another store says they've had many customers asking for K-2, but don't have it yet. But they did offer our undercover producer a number of other legal alternatives, including a pricey plethora of pills and extracts, promising everything from body tingles and euphoric rushes to relaxation, pain relief and mood elevation.

"You can see right here there are one, two, three, four, five, six compounds right there," said Dr. David Eichhorn, chair of the chemistry department at Wichita State University.

Dr. Eichhorn agreed to analyze the samples for us. He says it would take weeks to positively identify everything in the drugs, but his preliminary findings are eye opening.

"One of the ingredients in there is one that would potentially get across the blood brain barrier and the reality is if you do play around these types of compounds, you run the risk of seriously upsetting the balance in the brain," he said.

K-2 was actually created in a chemistry lab at Clemson University. Since it's synthetic, it's not covered by law. Although police who have come into contact with it think it should be.

"I myself am a parent and it's scary to me," said Deputy Farkes.

And that's where Representative Peggy Mast comes in.

"One bad experience can have a lifelong implication in someone's life," she said.

After recently finding out about K-2, she is looking to passing legislation next session to make it illegal.

"My concern was we don't know where it's coming from, there's no quality control on this

product," she said. "We don't know the people who are selling it, what they're cutting it with, we don't know the dangers our kids are taking by experimenting with it."

Mast sponsored legislation in the past that outlaws hallucinogenic plants and saliva, but says lawmakers just can't keep up with everything that's on the shelves.

"Maybe that's something we really need to address," she said. "How do we get ahead of the game instead of reacting to what has occurred and what's already there."

Those who sold us the products say they don't sell them to anyone under 18 and adults can make their own decisions. They also say the substance is mostly herbal and not even as harmful as alcohol.

Great Britain, Germany, Poland, France, South Korea and Russia have already moved to ban the sale of K-2 and similar synthetic marijuana products.



A new type of drug called K2 has entered Johnson County. K2 is composed of herbal incense and is commonly smoked in either a drug pipe or a bong. K2 is sold in four different varieties, with K2 Blonde and K2 Summit being the most popular. K2 Summit is reported to be the strongest of the four varieties. K2 is primarily sold in three ounce packages and the price per package is \$25. It is gaining tremendous popularity among the teenage population in Johnson County. Juvenile probation officers have reported that they are seeing an increase in abnormal drug screens, which they believe is related to the usage of K2. One local juvenile reported that he no longer smokes marijuana and is only going to smoke K2 from now on. A K2 user posted on the internet that K2 produces a high 10x that of marijuana and he "couldn't move for an hour".

K2 is currently being sold at an herbal shop in Lawrence on Massachusetts St. We recently purchased a package of K2 Blonde from the store and submitted it to the Johnson Crime Lab for testing. It was analyzed and no controlled substances were found. Synthetic cannabinoids were found, however they are currently legal.

It is important to note that even though K2 is legal; a driver that is impaired from using it can still be arrested. This would be similar to someone under the influence of prescribed medication or over-the-counter medication. In these cases it would be wise to consult a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE).

From our DEA Agent...FYI
Janine L. Gracy, MSE, CHES, CPS
Director, Regional Prevention Center
Johnson County, Kansas

Our sources at Johnson County Sheriff's Department wanted to clarify that the price per package is \$25 per GRAM, not ounce, as stated in the original information. This was an error that was overlooked and not meant to state per "ounce". Please let your network know about this correction. Thanks.

Karen L. Leisner, *LMSW, CPP*, Prevention Coordinator, Johnson County, Kansas

Everyone: Important information on a new drug, K2, that is legal and the adolescents have found it. See link below. Kendall Heiman, PTS Program Director, was interviewed for the article. If you have any questions please e-mail her at kendall.heiman@professional treatmentservices.com thanks.

<http://www2.ijworld.com/news/2009/nov/04/new-legal-drug-has-law-enforcement-concerned-and-i/>

Response from Sedgwick County Law Enforcement: Have not seen it yet.

-----Original Message-----

From: Atnip, Kenneth, Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2009 11:26 AM

Informative Websites

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov/parents/index.php>

<http://www.kansasfamily.com/index.cfm>

<http://www.timetotalk.org/>

An online community, resources and toolkit to help parents connect with their kids.

<http://www.theantidrug.com>

Provides parents and caregivers with strategies and tips on raising drug-free children.

<http://www.faceproject.org/>

Resources, training and action on alcohol issues.

<http://www.why21.org>

Offers facts about why the Minimum Legal Drinking Age is important and how it saves lives.

<http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/>

Emerging Issues: “Shock Dope”

Below is information Teresa Walters has recently received from Emporia law enforcement.

FYI: I had an offender inform me of a way for people to get high. He calls it “shock dope”. He says that it is simply made, looks like meth, has very similar effects of meth, and is NOT detectible in a Urine Analysis. He says that “shock dope” is made by hooking a jumper cable to a battery and attaching it to a window screen. He says once hooked up, you simply spray the screen with “Raid” bug killer (which contains 80% ether). He says the chemical reaction with the shock from the battery creates a crystal like substance to form. Then that product can be used in the same way as meth (injected, smoked, snorted). He reports the only real difference in the effect of this vs. meth is that this effect doesn’t last as long as the meth effect. He reports he has used it in the past and has recently heard it has become a popular method around here. He is currently in jail, so he would be hearing this from some of our finest!

I called Detective Mishler and he reports he has heard of this process in the past; but not heard of it by this name. He reports when he had heard about it, he called the KBI and spoke with the chemist there. He was told that it has NO narcotic component to it, so it is completely legal. Basically Raid is made to kill bugs, so the chemical component of it will mess with the person’s neurological functions; therefore making the person feel “loopy”. I would speculate it would be similar to “huffing” some household chemical.