



Barbara LaWall
Pima County Attorney

Pima County Attorney's Office
32 N. Stone Avenue
Suite 1400
Tucson, AZ 85701

Phone (520) 740-5600
Fax (520) 740-5585

www.pcao.pima.gov

PRESS RELEASE

For more information contact:
Isabel Burruel Smutzer
Communications Coordinator
(520) 740-5622

Email: isabel.burruel-smutzer@pcao.pima.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PIMA COUNTY ATTORNEY BARBARA LAWALL WELCOMES CRACKDOWN ON SYNTHETIC DRUGS

(TUCSON, ARIZONA) Pima County Attorney Barbara LaWall is welcoming a new state law cracking down on a synthetic drug that has the same effects as methamphetamine or cocaine.

"This drug represents a significant threat to our community," LaWall said. "We need to go after it – and those who distribute it – with every resource we have at our disposal."

Under a new law signed last week by Gov. Jan Brewer, the sale or possession of synthetic stimulants commonly known as "bath salts" is now illegal in Arizona.

This dangerous drug, which was available legally over the counter and occasionally labeled as "plant food," is a psychoactive stimulant. The passing of HB2356 outlaws bath salts from retail outlets in Pima County and throughout Arizona.

"Bath salts are quickly becoming a serious problem in our community. They are a dangerous drug that should not be in our corner markets or neighborhoods," said LaWall. "The legislature did the right thing by criminalizing this dangerous substance."

Last October, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration used its emergency scheduling authority to control three of the synthetic stimulants related to bath salts. That action made their possession and sale temporarily illegal in the U.S. for at least 12 months while the DEA studies whether to permanently control the substances.

Arizona's new law had the strong support of the Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council, as well as law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

"This law is a step in the right direction, but we must not stop here," said LaWall. "New and dangerous synthetic drugs are hitting the market daily, and we must continue working to stay one step ahead."

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