



# PROPOSED ORDINANCE TO BAN ILLICIT SYNTHETIC DRUGS ("KUSH")

Presented to Quality of Life Committee

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# A Brief Overview

- Kush (a.k.a. “K2” or “Spice”)
  - Originally marketed as a legal marijuana substitute
  - A mixture of herbs and spices that is typically sprayed with synthetic compounds that mimic the effects of controlled substances like ecstasy and meth
  - Up to 100 times more potent than THC (active ingredient in marijuana)
- Sold at small retail outlets and online
- Growing drug epidemic among young people



# Who Uses it?

- High school students
  - Kush is the second-most frequently abused substance
  - Misguided perception that Kush is a safer, legal alternative to illicit drugs
- Young people, ages 12-29 constituted 75% of ER visits for synthetic marijuana (Kush) in 2013

# Effects of Kush on the User

Side effects include:

- Hallucinations
- Panic attacks
- Lose consciousness
- Kidney damage
- Heart attack
- Addiction/withdrawal
- Psychotic episodes
- Extreme agitation and violent behavior
- Could result in death



# FAKE POT REAL DANGER

SMOKING SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA, LIKE SPICE AND K2, HAS LED TO MORE THAN **250 HOSPITAL VISITS** IN COLORADO IN TWO MONTHS.

THERE IS A BAD BATCH ON THE STREETS. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S IN IT.

SMOKING IT CAUSES PARANOIA, SEIZURES, AND COMA.

For more information, call the CO HELP LINE 1-877-462-2911  
or 303-389-1687 or visit [www.cohelp.us](http://www.cohelp.us).

The Colorado Health Emergency Line for Public Information (COHELP) is a public support service sponsored by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.



# Fatalities and Severe Injuries Attributed to Kush Use

- Tragedies involving teenagers:
  - Jumped off a balcony stating he could fly and died
  - Lost ability to walk, read, write, and perform basic math
  - Heart attacks
  - Institutionalized 17 times and attempted suicide 3 times over a 2 year period after smoking Kush

# Severe Effects of Kush Usage

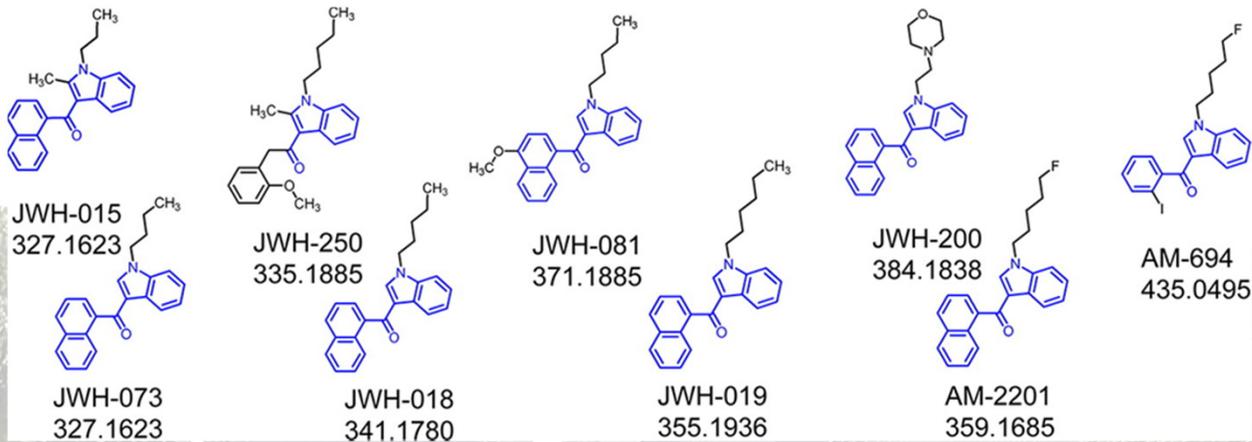
- Number of ER visits for Kush doubled from 2010 to 2011, increasing from 11,400 to 28,500 (nationwide)
- Almost 120 overdoses in 5 days (Dallas and Austin, May 2014)
- Over 100 people treated within weeks (Louisiana)
- 44 overdoses over 3 days (Manchester, N.H.)
- Between 17-25 overdoses in 1 night (Boston)

# Texas State Law

- Current Texas state law is inadequate
  - Law based on specific chemical structures and effects (difficult to prove)
  - Manufacturers rapidly change the chemical structure to avoid legislation
  - Effective legislation under Texas state law requires continually listing new compounds

# Evade State Law with Evolving Chemicals

- Houston Forensic Science Center Lab reports seeing 12 different compounds so far this year.
- Customs and Border Patrol reports seeing on average, 1 new compound every week.



# Other Governmental Efforts to Ban Kush

- Kush is banned by:
  - DEA
  - Almost all states
  - Many Texas cities, including:
    - Pearland
    - Pasadena
    - Angleton
    - Baytown
    - Conroe
    - Dallas
    - Plano
    - Lubbock
    - Corpus Christi
    - Texarkana
    - Deer Park
    - La Porte
    - College Station
    - Dickinson
    - Lake Jackson

# Proposed Ordinance - Definitions

- Illicit synthetic drug is defined as a plant material:
  - that contains a synthetic chemical that has no legitimate relation to the advertised use of the product;
  - labeled to suggest the substance is a substitute for or otherwise mimics the pharmacological effects of marihuana (“marijuana”), a controlled substance, or a controlled substance analogue as defined by Texas law; or
  - sold with verbal or written representations at the point of sale suggesting that the substance mimics the pharmacological effects of marihuana (“marijuana”), a controlled substance, or a controlled substance analogue as defined by Texas law.

# Proposed Ordinance

## Penalty:

Any violation of the provisions of this article shall be and constitute a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$2,000.00.

## Seizure:

Any product or substance... in violation of any provision of this section, may be seized by any peace officer under this section and removed and stored as evidence in accordance with law.

## Effective Date:

30 days after date of passage

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