



Sheriff of Charlotte County

7474 Utilities Road
Punta Gorda, Florida 33982
(941) 639-2101

December 16, 2013

To all Charlotte County Convenience Businesses:

On November 26, 2013, the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) adopted by unanimous vote Ordinance No. 2013-033, the Charlotte County Illicit Synthetic Drug and Drug Paraphernalia Ordinance ("Ordinance"), which makes it unlawful for any person to possess, provide, sell or distribute any illicit synthetic drug which includes spice, synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic marijuana, bath salts, synthetic cathinones, synthetic stimulants, or misbranded drugs. Some of the common street names of some the illicit synthetic drugs include, but are not limited to: Bliss, Black Mamba, Bombay Blue, Fake Weed, Genie, Spice, Zohai, K2, K3, Smoke, Bliss, Blue Silk, Cloud Nine, Drone, Energy-I, Ivory Wave, Lunar Wave, Meow Meow, Ocean Burst, Pure Ivory, Purple Wave, Red Dove, Snow Leopard, Stardust and Vanilla Sky.

In addition the Ordinance places restrictions on businesses that sell or display drug paraphernalia, as defined in the Ordinance; makes it unlawful for any person to sell or provide drug paraphernalia to any person under the age of 18; and makes it unlawful for any person under the age of 18 to possess drug paraphernalia.

This letter is to inform you, the business proprietor and your employees that the Illicit Synthetic Drug and Drug Paraphernalia Ordinance will become effective on January 1, 2014, and may be enforced by any law enforcement or code enforcement officer within the unincorporated area of Charlotte County. The CCSO is advising you to immediately remove any items from your store that are in violation of this Ordinance. Furthermore, you must comply with restrictions in the Ordinance regarding signage and display of drug paraphernalia.

Any violation(s) of this Ordinance are punishable by both criminal and civil penalties.

During the 2013 state legislative session, the Florida Legislature passed SB 294, Chapter 2013, Laws of Florida, which added additional synthetic drugs to Schedule I of Florida's controlled substance schedule. The new law codified the Attorney General's emergency rule that included several new synthetic cannabinoids, substitute cathinones, and phenethylamines as Schedule I controlled substances. Persons who choose to manufacture these synthetic drugs have been able to "tweak" their chemical composition to avoid criminal charges. However, the CCSO believes that the emergency drug schedule coupled with this Ordinance will assist the CCSO in protecting our citizens, and especially our youth, from those persons who choose to create and market illicit synthetic drugs and mislead the public by false and misleading packaging.

All those who currently possess, provide, sell or distribute illicit synthetic drugs and/or drug paraphernalia and/or items described by misleading packaging, are encouraged to become familiar with the Ordinance and its penalties by going to the official Charlotte County Sheriff's Office website and read the Ordinance in its

entirety. Go to <http://www.ccsso.org/PublicInterest/legislation.cfm> and select the links under County Ordinance Information.

The CCSO is providing fair warning that criminal and civil penalties exist for any violation of this Ordinance. Each individual packet of illicit synthetic drugs is considered a separate violation of the Charlotte County Code and the fine for a first offense for each illicit synthetic drug that is in violation of this county ordinance is set at \$250 per individual packet.