

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, January 14, 2016



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Office of the Attorney General and DEA Lead Webinar to Educate Convenience Store Owners and Operators about Synthetic Drugs

'Synthetic Drugs: Ensuring Your Entire Product Line Is Legal' Offers Full Tutorial

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) for the District of Columbia is partnering with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to offer an educational webinar about the dangers of synthetic drugs and how convenience store owners and operators can help combat the spread of these deadly substances.

“Synthetic Drugs: Ensuring Your Entire Product Line is Legal,” will be hosted by NACS, the Association for Convenience and Fuel Retailing (formerly known as the National Association of Convenience Stores). The webinar is open to the public and will be viewable online on **Thursday, January 14, 2016 at 1:00 p.m.**

To register for the webinar, please visit <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/300635437451971842>. A recording of the webinar will also be available on the NACS website (<http://www.nacsonline.com>) a day after it takes place.

“This webinar will help convenience store owners and operators in our city and across the country recognize and combat synthetic drug trafficking,” Attorney General Karl A. Racine said. **“Synthetic drugs can induce immediate, psychotic and deadly reactions, and we are working on every front available – including educating the public and the business community – to ensure that our neighborhoods and our children will be safe.”**

Synthetic cannabinoids (often known by street or brand names like “Bizarro” and “Scooby Snax”) and synthetic cathinones (known by street or brand names like “Flakka” and “bath salts”) are manufactured compounds designed to alter the mental state of the user. However, they are illegal and often contain untested chemicals that can induce dangerous and even deadly effects in users.

The webinar is the result of collaboration between OAG and the DEA, and will educate store owners on what synthetic drugs are, why they are illegal and dangerous, how to avoid selling them, and how to report distributors to the proper authorities.

“I want to thank DEA Special Agents Lisa Pryor and Rodney Young as well as OAG staffers Argatonia Weatherington, Habib Ilahi, Melissa Shear and Marta Markowska for their work to help us create this informative webinar,” Attorney General Racine said. **“Bringing an end to the problem of synthetic drugs requires cooperation across local and federal agencies and the business sector, and I’m glad to have DEA and NACS as partners in this fight.”**

OAG Emerging Drug Trends Task Force

The District’s effort to collaborate with NACS and the DEA on the webinar is part of the work of OAG’s Emerging Drug Trends (EDT) Task Force. Attorney General Racine formed the team in 2015 in response to the resurgence of heroin abuse and increasing problems related to synthetic cannabinoids in the District. The EDT Task Force analyzes and coordinates OAG’s response to emerging drugs and drug-use trends in the District. The EDT Task Force is led by Deputy Attorney General for Public Safety Tamar Meekins and is composed of Assistant Attorneys General and staff from multiple OAG divisions. They combat new and existing drug trends in the District using a multi-pronged, multi-disciplinary approach, including researching drug trends, working with local and federal partner agencies to coordinate efforts and share information, providing education and outreach to affected communities and groups, and studying best practices from other jurisdictions.

For more information on the OAG Emerging Drug Trends Task Force, see:

<http://oag.dc.gov/release/oag-fights-trends-heroin-and-other-dangerous-drugs-through-local-regional-task-forces>.

About DEA

The mission of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is to enforce the controlled substances laws and regulations of the United States and bring to the criminal and civil justice system of the United States, or any other competent jurisdiction, those organizations and principal members of organizations, involved in the growing, manufacture, or distribution of controlled substances appearing in or destined for illicit traffic in the United States; and to recommend and support non-enforcement programs aimed at reducing the availability of illicit controlled substances on the domestic and international markets.

About NACS

Founded on August 14, 1961 as the National Association of Convenience Stores, NACS is an international trade association representing more than 2,200 retail and 1,600 supplier company members. NACS serves the convenience and fuel retailing industry by providing industry knowledge, connections and advocacy to ensure the competitive viability of its members' businesses. In 2007, the association shortened its name to NACS and added a tagline that better defines its presence both internationally and at the retail fueling level: The Association for Convenience and Petroleum Retailing. In 2010, this statement was further enhanced to The Association for Convenience and Fuel Retailing. While 47 of the top 50 convenience store companies in the United States are members of NACS, the majority of its members are small, independent operators. More than 70% of the total NACS membership is comprised of companies that operate 10 stores or less. This membership base roughly tracks the industry as a whole.

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