

DEA Administrator Michele M. Leonhart
Operation Log Jam Press Conference
DEA Headquarters
Arlington, VA
July 26, 2012

Good afternoon and thank you very much for being here at DEA today. I am proud to present the results of *Operation Log Jam* today with our partners from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Internal Revenue Service. With me today is Acting Director Jim Chaparro from ICE's Office of Homeland Security Investigations, and Chief Rich Webber from IRS CID. I also want to take a moment to acknowledge the support and cooperation of the U. S. Customs and Border Protection—represented here by Acting Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations James Engleman—as well as the United States Postal Inspection Service, represented by Deputy Chief Inspector Shawn Tiller. Thank you all for being here today.

This operation is the first nation-wide, coordinated U.S. law enforcement strike specifically targeting designer synthetic drugs. Sold in legitimate-looking packaging, these insidious substances are marketed directly to teenagers and young adults with benign and catchy titles like Spice, Blaze, Vanilla Sky and incense. And many of these products come with a disclaimer that they are quote 'not for human consumption,' to mask the dangers they pose. But in fact, they are incredibly dangerous, with users having unpredictable and sometimes deadly reactions to these substances.

In just one year, calls to Poison Control Centers about synthetic cannabinoids such as Spice and K2 have more than doubled, and the calls regarding synthetic cathinones, marketed as bath salts, have increased more than 20 fold.

But today we are moving beyond just legislating and scheduling these dangerous substances—we have taken decisive action at every level of this illegal industry, from manufacturers to distributors to retailers.

As of today, *Operation LogJam* has resulted in 91 arrests around the country, and a staggering amount of drug seizures – 4.8 million packets of synthetic cannabinoids and the products to produce nearly 13.6 million more, as well as 167,000 packets of synthetic cathinones, and the products to produce an additional 392,000. Additionally, \$36 million dollars in cash, 53 guns, and almost \$6 million in assets have been seized to date.

Yesterday, over 265 search warrants were executed, which included 29 manufacturing facilities.

Together we are sending a clear message to those who profit from the sale of these dangerous substances: you are nothing more than a drug trafficker and we will bring

you to justice. The web of connections between suppliers, distributors, and retailers is enormous and complex, but at DEA, we are experts in connecting the dots, identifying patterns, finding relationships and gathering evidence that lead to the ultimate destruction of drug trafficking networks that impact the supply of these drugs to communities across the country.

Our state and local counterparts have been on the frontlines of this battle, with many states enacting laws allowing them to take these drugs off the street. Just recently, and thanks to Congress, the President signed into law the Synthetic Drug Control Act of 2012, which immediately controls 26 substances and provides tools that will allow DEA to control additional emerging designer drugs. And even with these new tools, DEA has identified a large number of additional emergent substances that are not yet specifically controlled. But that doesn't mean DEA will turn a blind eye to these dangerous drugs. Using the Analogue Enforcement Act, DEA can, and will, pursue those who skirt the letter of the law by simply tweaking a molecule, or changing a chemical formula.

Make no mistake, DEA and our partners are committed to combating this alarming and dangerous trend. And Operation Log Jam is just the first of many strikes we will take against these criminals.

And now, Acting Director James Chaparro from ICE's Homeland Security Investigations office.

###