

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**CONTACT:**

Lt. Matt Novak at (619) 531-2784 or mnovak@pd.sandiego.gov

**Search Warrant – Synthetic Drugs**

**San Diego**– On August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016, detectives from the Narcotics Unit served a search warrant at Andy’s Smoke Shop, 550 University Avenue in the Hillcrest community. Employees from Andy’s had previously sold spice and were put on notice by the City to cease and desist. The owners of Andy’s Smoke Shop met with City Attorney representatives in May 2016 and agreed to permanently stop selling spice from the store. On June 14, 2016 the City of San Diego enacted a new ordinance banning the possession and sales of synthetic drugs, including spice, and the owners and employees of Andy’s were notified of this ordinance. On June 28, 2016 the owners of Andy’s were served with a court order prohibiting spice sales from the store. In August 2016, Narcotic Detectives developed information that spice was still being sold from the store resulting in the search warrant that was served today.

Upon service of the search warrant detectives recovered approximately two pounds of spice, both in bulk quantity and packaged for sale. Ossam Shaba, 55, an employee of the store, was arrested for violation of a court order and possession for sales of synthetic drugs (spice). The spice was recovered from Shaba’s person, his vehicle, and inside the store. Shaba was booked into jail and this case will be forwarded to the San Diego City Attorney’s Office for prosecution.

The Police Department and City Attorney’s Office will continue to collaborate and vigorously enforce and prosecute provisions in San Diego’s synthetic drug ordinance. The safety of the public is jeopardized when synthetic substances are sold and distributed to potential consumers. Violations of San Diego’s synthetic drug ordinance will not be tolerated. Those who violate this law face criminal and civil penalties up to and including 6 months in jail, \$1,000 fine, 3 years probation and \$2500 fine; per violation.

The below photographs depict some of the evidence recovered during this search warrant operation.



###