



News from
Councilmember Todd Gloria

District Three

NEWS RELEASE

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City Council Bans Spice in the City of San Diego

Most Aggressive Legislation in the State, Effective Immediately

SAN DIEGO (June 14, 2016) – The City of San Diego today voted unanimously to ban the sale, manufacture, possession, and distribution of Spice and related drugs. The ordinance was swiftly brought forward by the City Attorney's Office and the San Diego Police Department following a memorandum from Councilmember Gloria in April outlining the urgent need for new regulations.

"Today the City Council took an important step towards making our City safer by banning Spice to ensure people who sell and manufacture this class of extremely dangerous drugs can be held accountable," said Councilmember Gloria. **"It is unconscionable that this substance was ever available to be legally purchased at stores in our communities and I am glad we have taken action to get these life-threatening drugs off our streets as soon as possible."**

The law targets a class of dangerous synthetic drugs responsible for sending people to emergency rooms at alarming rates. Since March 2015, public safety personnel report having answered over 350 emergency response calls related to Spice, at a total cost to taxpayers of \$3.2 million, \$2.4 million for ambulances and \$800,000 for fire engines.

Selling synthetic cannabinoid compounds like Spice has been illegal in California since 2012, with five specified chemicals banned by the State. However, Spice manufacturers frequently change the drug with new and unknown chemicals and the state legislation has not kept up with banning these compounds. The ordinance contains the first comprehensive regulation of Spice, Bath Salts, and other psychoactive substances that mimic the effects of cannabis and other drugs. The effects of Spice include hallucinations, violent and combative behavior, paranoia, stroke, and often death.

"Because the manufacturers of Spice and related drugs are constantly changing their chemical composition, the effects are unpredictable and can vary dramatically, with many experiencing violent seizures putting users and the people around them at risk," said Councilmember Gloria. **"Significant public safety resources are being expended to deal with people under the influence of Spice, so banning access to this drug will reduce Spice related calls, making first responders available for other urgent needs."**

The City Council approved an Emergency Ordinance along with the Spice ban to allow for the ban to become effective immediately. San Diego's new law will be the toughest Spice ordinance in California.

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