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Prosecutor Oliver Receives DEA Award

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Oliver First Area State Prosecutor to Receive DEA Award

What is the first thought that comes to your mind when you hear the words "*Bath Salts*"? If you are like many that are simply naive or unaware of the drug culture that is in our society, your first thought is possibly the "[Lose Yourself In Luxury](#)" or the "[Ancient Chinese Secret](#)" of "Calgon" water softening minerals. If that is your level of understanding, we are all dangerously uninformed of the pitfalls and problems found in the world of manufactured synthetic drugs.

Bath Salts are drugs. These are drugs just like any mind altering, habit forming dangerous illegal drug. These are synthetic stimulants that are marketed as "bath salts" and are often found in a number of retail products. Technically, these synthetic stimulants are chemicals. The chemicals are synthetic derivatives of cathinone, a central nervous system stimulant, which is an active chemical found naturally in the khat plant. Mephedrone and MDPV (3-4 methylene-dioxypyrovalerone) are two of the designers cathinones most commonly found in these "bath salt" products. Many of these products are sold over the Internet, in convenience stores and in "head shops".

Realizing the dangers and the exposures that our children have to these synthetic drugs, Prosecuting Attorney Russ Oliver took a bold and unpopular stand to have these items removed from the shelves of retail stores in our area. He called them what they were, "Drugs".

“It was the snowball that got it all started for DEA,” that’s how Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Regional Supervisory Special Agent Michael Scalise described Stoddard County Prosecuting Attorney Russ Oliver’s work on the synthetic drug epidemic.

“Mr. Oliver is the first state prosecutor in this



area to receive this award because his leadership and work on the frontlines of this new battle in the war on drugs has been instrumental in law enforcement’s advancements against the growing threat of synthetics,” Scalise explained at an award ceremony on Monday at the Federal Courthouse in Cape Girardeau.

“Russ’ work was one of the catalysts that initially got DEA’s attention and eventually lead to ‘Operation Log Jam’ in which a nationwide sweep of convenience stores and ‘head-shops’ netted hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal property seizures and thousands of pounds of synthetic drug product,” continued Scalise.

"I'm honored to be recognized by DEA, however this award is an accomplishment for all of Stoddard county's law enforcement community," humbly stated Oliver. "Sheriff Carl Hefner and the municipal agencies of the county all had a hand in this success. They all can be truly proud of this accomplishment."

Also present at the awards ceremony was Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson, Emerson, who sponsored the “Bath Salt Ban” legislation that recently was introduced in the US Congress, and State Senator Rob Mayer, who also passed multiple synthetic drug bans while in the Missouri legislature.

Emerson said of Oliver’s work, “we’re all proud of the work that Russ has done. These drugs have truly scary consequences. While working on the Bath Salt Ban legislation, we learned so much about the effects that these substances have on individuals. It is vital that the families of this area become aware of these dangers in their backyard. Russ’ work no doubt has saved lives and informed thousands of these dangers.”

Also on hand was State Senate President Pro Tem Rob Mayer. “These drugs are a menace to our communities. We passed multiple pieces of legislation to give law enforcement the tools they needed to fight this epidemic. It’s great to see the efforts of our local law enforcement recognized on a national level” said Mayer.

During media interviews Oliver was asked if because of this award he considered this a good day, Oliver responded “any day that the media talks about synthetic drugs it raises

awareness of the dangers of these substances. Awareness of these dangers saves lives. Any day that lives are saved is a good day.”

For a good source of additional information related to "Bath Salt"; visit the website for "[Just Think Twice](#)". This site boasts the slogan of "YOU HAVE HEARD THE FICTION, NOW LEARN THE FACTS". A little better understanding of what we are dealing with could help us all.

Without research or experience, we many times loose touch with the dangers that surround us in our society. These manufactured drugs are sneaking into our world under the disguise of energy stimulants that we have been excepting of for years, such as "No Dose" or Monster Energy Drinks. However the long term effects and dangers of Bath Salt exceeds the acceptable level of a safe stimulant.

Compliments and kudos to Russ Oliver for his award, but most of all for his willingness to step forward on his beliefs that our families and children deserve to be protected from the ravages of a drug such as Bath Salts.

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