

## WHAT'S NEW?

### Hand Sanitizers: The New Alcohol

A new trend finds that children are drinking hand sanitizers for the alcohol content. The American Association of Poison Control Centers reports that 12,000 cases of poison from hand sanitizer ingestion were reported last year.



Hand sanitizers contain 62% alcohol, as compared to 35% in a bottle of rum. Unlike alcohol, it is legal for children to buy hand sanitizers and it is only illegal for them to consume the product if they are driving.

Some children are attracted to the taste of the sanitizers because of the sweet smell and the bright colors. Some children have become ill simply by licking their hands after using the product.

This report has been confirmed by Snopes.com, a rumor confirmation site.

(Source: PRIDE-Omaha, Fall 2007)

### Blow: Energy Powder

“Blow” is a new product meant to glorify drug use. It is meant to be mixed with any drink to give users what its producers call “pure uncut energy.”

Blow, slang for cocaine, looks like the real thing. It comes in a white powder form, is packaged in a clear vial, and is delivered with a mirror and fake credit card. One vial contains 240 grams of caffeine, or about four times the caffeine found in an espresso coffee. So far, the product has been available only online.

The concern is that it makes teens think that cocaine use is an accepted part of the culture. The aggressive marketing campaign for blow can be viewed at [www.iloveblow.com](http://www.iloveblow.com). The company owners state, “Anyone offended by our product needs to lighten up and get a life.”

(Source: PRIDE-Omaha, Fall 2007)



## TOBACCO NEWS

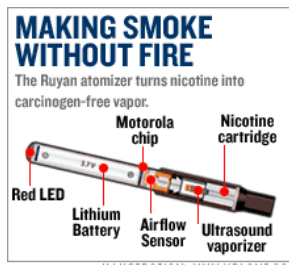
### Electronic Cigarette

Approval from the FDA is being sought by a Chinese company in order that the company may sell a new product in the U.S. The Hong Kong company, Golden Dragon, is marketing an electronic cigarette that delivers nicotine to users, but not smoke. The president of that company indicates the product is not meant to be a smoking cessation device, but a smoking substitution.

The cigarette is called the Ruyan, which means “like smoking”. It looks and feels like a real cigarette, but has no tobacco and is smokeless and odorless. It retails for \$208. Users can buy nicotine cartridges in three strengths for the battery powered device. Each cartridge costs \$4 and delivers about 350 puffs.

The electronic cigarette is currently sold in China, Turkey, Israel and Australia.

(Source: jointogether.org; 8-14-07)



### More Than Nicotine Makes Smoking Hard to Quit

Cigarettes contain more than 100 additives, in addition to nicotine, that could reinforce addiction as well as making smoking harmful.

Cigarettes contain 599 additives, 100 of which are potentially harmful. Additives like chocolate and cocoa make it easier for smoke to penetrate the lungs, while others act as anesthetics that prevent coughing.

Tobacco companies closely guard the ingredients in their products so it is difficult to know if the additives disclosed in 1994 are still being used. But, the researchers who studied the list found that more than 100 of the ingredients “camouflage environmental (secondhand) tobacco smoke emitted from cigarettes, enhance or maintain nicotine delivery, could increase the addictiveness of cigarettes, and mask symptoms and illnesses associated with smoking behaviors.”

The researcher at UCLA says, “They’re making people less aware of tobacco (smoke) and making the cigarette more addictive. There is so much going on with these additives that it’s an uncontrolled experiment on billions of people around the planet.”

(Source: jointogether.org; 7-7-07 and September 2007 *American Journal of Public Health*)

# ALCOHOL IN THE NEWS

## Alcopops are Liquor

The California State Board of Equalization has ruled that so-called “alcopop” drinks should be taxed as distilled spirits rather than beer. The decision is expected to increase California state taxes on products such as Mike’s Hard Lemonade and Smirnoff Ice by about 25%. Currently California taxes beer at 20 cents per gallon while distilled spirits are taxed at \$3.30 per gallon.

States such as Rhode Island, NEBRASKA, Vermont and Oregon are among the states tracking the California case. Maine began taxing the alcopops as liquor products several years ago.

Alcohol industry critics charge that the sweet and fruity alcoholic drinks are designed to appeal to young drinkers, especially females, who don’t like the flavor of beer or hard liquor.

(Source: jointogether.org; 8-24-07)



## Alcoholic Energy Drinks

State attorneys general from twenty-eight states are calling on the Bush administration to crack down on the marketing of alcoholic energy drinks, saying they target youth with potency claims.

The group wants the federal Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau to investigate the marketing practices of companies like Miller Brewing Co. (which makes the Sparks and Sparks Plus energy drinks), Anheuser-Busch (Bud Extra), and Charge Beverages of Portland (Liquid Charge and Liquid Core). They also want investigators to analyze the ingredients of alcoholic energy drinks to determine whether they should be classified as malt beverages or distilled spirits. The AGs say that the brewers are making misleading health-related claims about their energy drinks, stating “Combining alcohol with caffeine hardly seems healthy and that false claim is what we seek to halt.”



(Source: jointogether.org; 8-22-07)

## Teen Bingers Favor Liquor

While adult heavy drinkers prefer to binge on beer, adolescent binge drinkers prefer liquor. Researchers at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) say that while beer is easier for adults to obtain, teens often raid their parents’ liquor cabinets without being noticed.

The study found that 75% of adult bingers preferred beer while 17% drank liquor and 9% drank wine. But liquor was the most popular drink among youth drinkers, at 49%.

(Source: jointogether.org; 8-8-07)



# RESOURCES



## Addiction411

A new MySpace health-information site has been launched by Reckitt Benckiser, a pharmaceutical firm. The company makes the anti-addiction medication, Suboxone. This site focuses on addiction to opioid-based painkillers and is called Addiction411.

The company says the website will include information on the dangers associated with opioid abuse, warning signs of addiction, and interactive addiction questionnaire, information on treatment options, a treatment locator and other resources.

## Snopes.com

The website, [www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com) is a great resource for checking out rumors related to many topics, not just drugs or alcohol. This site will help check the validity of many urban legends and rumors that spread like wildfire on the internet.