

FENTANYL ALERT

Addendum to Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office Release of Information

The following is from a DEA press release that was recently rolled out to law enforcement alerting them to exercise extreme caution when it comes to encountering narcotics on the street:

"In March of 2015, the DEA issued a nationwide alert on Fentanyl as a threat to health and public safety. Fentanyl is a dangerous, powerful Schedule II narcotic responsible for a series of overdose deaths within the United States. During the last two years, the distribution of Fentanyl... has been linked to the unprecedented outbreak of thousands of overdoses and deaths. The overdoses have occurred at an alarming rate and are the basis of the officer safety alert."

Fentanyl is up to 50 times more potent than heroin and is **extremely dangerous to law enforcement and anyone else that comes into contact with**. Just a few micrograms (similar to granules of table salt) can be lethal and deadly." The DEA has seen Fentanyl in several forms including powder, blotter paper, tablets and sprays. The DEA has warned that Fentanyl is not only dangerous to users but for law enforcement, public health workers, first responders, and people who unknowingly come into contact with it, as they are often put at extreme risk of potential lethal overdose. Just touching Fentanyl or accidentally inhaling the substance can result in absorption through the skin and is one of the biggest dangers leading to lethal overdose. The onset of adverse health effects such as disorientation, coughing, sedation, respiratory distress or cardiac arrest are very rapid and profound and can occur within minutes of exposure. Narcan is commonly used as an overdose reversing drug.

As a precautionary measure, we are asking that school personnel, students, and families be advised of the following:

- (1) If you encounter a person with a narcotic related substance on his or her person you should immediately call law enforcement. We are advising against handling any unknown substances they may encounter from students. Law enforcement has been properly trained in protocol on how to handle these types of narcotics as they can be deadly if disturbed or handled inappropriately.
- (2) Never touch a narcotics substance that you encounter from anyone. Please exercise extreme caution and do not touch it if you are not wearing gloves. If you encounter a pill bottle, ziplock baggie or other container containing narcotics even if it is in pill form, do not open the item as even disturbing the substance can cause powder to become airborne and lead to a potential deadly overdose.
- (3) If you encounter a person who appears to be under the influence of a narcotic related substance on campus, please contact 911 and request emergency services to attend to the person. With a Fentanyl overdose, rapid response is critical and EMTs are the ones that are equipped to handle these circumstances. It is critical that EMT is contacted early as these situations needs to be addressed immediately for a good outcome.