



# Kevin Humphries MP

## Minister for Mental Health

## Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

## Minister for Western NSW

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2013

#### **HIGHLIGHTING THE DANGERS OF SYNTHETIC DRUGS DURING DRUG ACTION WEEK**

The NSW Minister for Mental and Health and Healthy Lifestyles, Kevin Humphries, is urging people to take the time during Drug Action Week to learn more about the dangers of synthetic drugs and the long-term damage they can do to people who use them.

Mr Humphries said Drug Action Week provided an opportunity to remind people that synthetic drugs are not 'soft' or 'recreational' products.

"Let's use Drug Action Week to bury the misconception that because synthetic drugs have been sold on shelves they present little or no danger to the user," Mr Humphries said.

"Synthetic drugs in all their forms represent a real danger to people's safety and well-being and have been known to lead to serious injury and illness, and in some instances death.

"Synthetic drugs are just as, if not more, dangerous than other illicit drugs. It is not known what drugs or ingredients have been used and in what quantities to create each new version.

"These products can contain untested chemicals, with unknown toxicity and potential for addiction and adverse reaction. They pose an extreme risk to the user, who has no way of knowing what experimental chemicals they are taking.

"In other words, every time someone ingests a synthetic drug they are playing Russian roulette with their health."

Minister for Fair Trading Anthony Roberts said that throughout Drug Action Week up to 120 Fair Trading Officers would be travelling across NSW to ensure retailers are not selling synthetic drugs during the interim ban issued as part of Operation Salt.

"People who sell these products have been warned that if they are caught with them on their shelves during the interim ban they will face fines of up to \$220,000 for an individual or \$1.1 million for a corporation," Mr Roberts said.

A record number of Drug Action Week events are being held throughout NSW this week, which will focus on the theme of *Drugs, Communities & Families!* A full list of NSW Drug Action Week events can be found online at: [www.drugactionweek.org.au](http://www.drugactionweek.org.au).