

Bath Salts, the Fear Factor

A few years ago bath salts were designed for aromatherapy for relaxation. Now they are the next drug...snort them to see what happens.

Methylenedioxypropylone & Mephedrone (Pronounce that!!!)

These are the active ingredients of bath salts. Just looking at the name alone says... "Don't Mess With It.". The euphoric feeling on a user is similar to Methamphetamine and Cocaine with the added benefit of hallucinations. For the older coppers still on the beat, from the late 1970's and early 1980's, think of PCP+ if you even have to deal with someone under the influence of this. Street names are "Ivory Wave, Bliss, White Lightning, Hurricane Charlie, Vanilla, Sky, Charge and White Knight." Make sure you visit the website below (Burning Tree) that gives a great pictorial overview of Bath Salt abuse.



Fear Factor

It's been reported that Poison Control Authorities are seeing increased incidents where the abuser exhibit "extreme paranoia, delusions of super-human strength...violent behavior, and possibly even murder." Even Emergency Room treatments for those who have overdosed on the typical drugs of abuse have reported that their protocols have not been very effective in handling this substance. The bottom line is that this stuff is nasty and just when we think drugs couldn't get worse to handle we encounter something else.

Another issue to consider are the users. College students know that if they are caught with Coke, Meth, Heroin or Marijuana for example, they will lose their financial aid from the feds. That's an awfully expensive high, which could make them even more dangerous to handle. Put them under the influence of a substance that makes them believe they can run through windows and fly with you underneath their arms and your first encounter could escalate to deadly force the moment you exit your cruiser.

Any indication of abuse should necessitate that the officer establishes immediate control first, and then further investigation. In other words, put cuffs on and ask questions later.

Adding it up

You know how mean the streets can be. There is no referee in the back yard of a home you just chased a suspect behind at 0300 hours. Some of these chemicals that suspects are ingesting are doing things to people that science has yet to figure out, but can give the perpetrator super-human strength. Brush up on your body language skills for threat recognition, and ACT by handcuffing them when appropriate. It's a case-by-case situation upon review with emphasis placed on officer safety.