



Police Departments Join Forces in Kratom Investigation *Incidents Spur Allegations of Distribution By Coach at Local High School*

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-March 3, 2023-The Steamboat Springs Police Department (SSPD) is aware of the Hayden Police Department's investigation of a Hayden School District sports coach. The Hayden PD investigation involves allegations that this coach provided kratom to athletes in that program.

SSPD in collaboration with Hayden PD has verified that the coach was also an employee of the Steamboat Springs High School, and that he likely provided this same substance to students in the school system. Both Hayden PD and SSPD have submitted their investigations to the District Attorney's Office.

"We believe other students in the Steamboat Springs district may have been affected and ask parents to immediately notify us if they learn their child was provided any substance by high school coaching staff," commented Interim Police Chief Mark Beckett.

Kratom is a tropical tree native to Southeast Asia. Consumption of its leaves produces both stimulant effects (in low doses) and sedative effects (in high doses), and can lead to psychotic symptoms, and psychological and physiological dependence. These leaves are crushed and then smoked, brewed with tea, or placed into gel capsules.

The FDA has not approved kratom for any medical use. In addition, the Department of Justice/Drug Enforcement Administration has listed kratom as a Drug and Chemical of Concern. In the U.S., the abuse of kratom has increased markedly in recent years.



Parents and students are encouraged to research the risks of kratom use. Documented side effects include weight loss, liver damage, muscle pain, dizziness, hallucinations, depression, breathing complications, and possibly seizure, coma, or death. It is a violation of Colorado law for an adult to provide Kratom to a juvenile.

SSPD encourages anyone who is concerned about school safety to utilize Safe2Tell (Safe2Tell.org). Safe2Tell is an anonymous way for students, parents, and the community to report any issues concerning safety or the safety of others.

All persons accused of crimes are presumed innocent until and unless their guilt is established beyond a reasonable doubt in court.

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