



City and County of Denver
Environmental Health
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For Immediate Release

Denver Environmental Health Restricts the Sale or Serving of Kratom for Human Consumption

November 20, 2017 – Effective immediately, Denver Environmental Health (DEH), Public Health Inspections Division is restricting the sale or serving of kratom for human consumption in Denver. Kratom is an herbal drug made from the leaf of a tree grown in Southeast Asia.

The restriction follows the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) recent [public health advisory warning consumers not to use kratom](#). There are no FDA-approved uses for kratom and the FDA does not allow kratom to be imported into the U.S. as a consumable commodity. Denver's [Food Establishment Rules and Regulations](#) require that all foods served or sold in Denver be sourced from food manufacturers that are under regulatory health oversight, and that the food is classified as a consumable product.

DEH is requiring Denver retailers selling kratom for non-consumptive use to take the following measures:

- A consumer advisory shall be affixed to each package of kratom product in large font and easily readable to all purchasers, stating: "This product is not intended for human consumption. Consuming kratom products may pose a risk, including death, to consumers and has addictive potential. Increased risk of injury or death may be posed by consuming with alcohol and other drugs."
- Retailers may not provide consumers with guidance for dosage or consumption.

Kratom contains psychoactive compounds called mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine, and is sold as powder, tea, liquids, foods, and pills. Kratom is also sold for non-consumptive use, such as for aromatherapy or soap making. However, it is often marketed as an alternative to controlled substances for its ability to produce opioid-like effects.

According to the FDA, the consumption of kratom carries health risks such as seizures, liver damage, and withdrawal symptoms. Like opioids, kratom use can lead to abuse, addiction, and dependence. Acute toxicity can lead to coma and/or death. Short- and long-term health impacts may exist depending on the specific product, duration, frequency, level of exposure and route of exposure. Consumers with concerns about their personal health should contact their physician with related questions.

Sales of kratom have also been banned or restricted in Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee, Vermont, Wisconsin, Illinois, Rhode Island, Louisiana, the city of San Diego (California), Sarasota County (Florida), Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Romania, and New Zealand.

[Read the statement from FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D. on the FDA advisory about deadly risks associated with kratom.](#)

Consumers or businesses with questions or concerns about kratom can contact DEH's Public Health Inspections Division at phicomments@denvergov.org or 720-913-1311.

As Denver's nationally-accredited local public health agency, the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) is dedicated to advancing Denver's environmental and public health goals. DEH Divisions include Animal Protection, Community Health, Environmental Quality, Office of the Medical Examiner and Public Health Inspections.

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