

ORDINANCE AMENDING RMC SECTION 6.24.080 AND ADDING SECTION 9.04.235 TO PROHIBIT THE SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF KRATOM PRODUCTS

Riverside Police Department

City Council
April 7, 2026

RiversideCA.gov

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BACKGROUND

- As of January 2026, there are 215 known locations selling tobacco products in the City including grocery stores, mini marts, smoke shops and gas stations
- 28 of those are classified as Smoke Shops per RMC which are defined as businesses with sales of tobacco constituting more than 30% of gross sales and/or 30% of net lease area
- Between March 2025 and January 2026, the Vice Unit observed mini marts, gas stations and smoke shops selling kratom and synthetic based kratom products that exceed 2% of 7-OH concentration
- Smoke shops were observed selling both NOS and kratom products along with illegal sales of psilocybin mushrooms, cannabis/cannabinoid products, and narcotics/narcotics paraphernalia.



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WHAT IS KRATOM?

- Tropical evergreen tree native to Southeast Asia
- Leaves contain 5 alkaloids
- 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) comprises 2% of total alkaloids
- Interacts with receptors in the brain as narcotics like morphine
- Stimulant in low doses that increases energy and heart rate
- Sedative in high doses that causes relaxation and pain relief
- Not FDA regulated or approved for medical use
- Concentrated / synthesized form is dangerous
- Regular use can lead to addiction, dependence and withdrawal symptoms like opioid withdrawal from heroin, oxycodone, hydrocodone and fentanyl



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KRATOM RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS

- Nausea
- Constipation
- Dizziness
- Tremor
- Sweating and vomiting
- Liver toxicity
- Seizures
- Respiratory depression
- Death

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES Public Health

NEWS RELEASE

313 N. Figueroa Street, Room 806 | Los Angeles, CA 90012 | (213) 288-8144 | media@ph.lacounty.gov

For Immediate Release:
September 12, 2025

Multiple Fatal Overdoses Tied to Synthetic Kratom Compound in Los Angeles County

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is making residents and health care providers aware of the risks of the synthetic kratom compound known as 7-Hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) after the County of Los Angeles Medical Examiner recently identified three fatal overdoses in LA County residents between the ages of 18 to 40 years old. Alcohol was present in all cases. The decedents were otherwise healthy, with no other substances identified as substantively contributing to their deaths.

Kratom and 7-OH products are unregulated and marketed as remedies for pain, anxiety, and depression. They are made from the leaves of a tree (*Mitragyna speciosa*) native to Southeast Asia that are crushed and then smoked, brewed with tea, or placed into gel capsules.



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KRATOM

Preventing The Next Wave of the Opioid Epidemic:
What You Need to Know About 7-OH

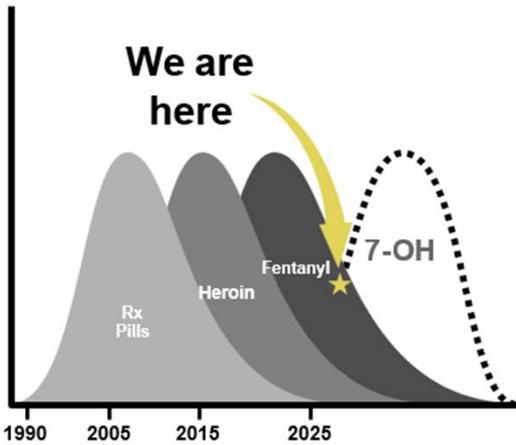


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The Opioid Epidemic is Evolving with 7-OH. We Can and Must Act Now to Prevent a New Wave.



1990 2005 2015 2025

Note: The next potential phase of the opioid crisis may be defined by the emergence of novel synthetic opioids like 7-OH, combined with an increasing prevalence of concurrent use of opioids and other controlled substances.

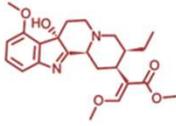


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KRATOM

7-OH is Engineered to be Addictive. It is a Potent Opioid by Design.

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Rx Pills |  Heroin |
|  Fentanyl |  7-OH |

7-OH (formally known as 7-Hydroxymitragynine) is a powerful psychoactive compound that occurs naturally in very small amounts in the Kratom plant.

7-OH products are concentrated derivatives often falsely marketed as Kratom.

Street names include 7-Hydroxy, 7-OHMG and '7'.




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KRATOM



- What began as doctor prescribed painkillers migrated to back-alley dealers when prescriptions dried up.
- Opioids have disturbingly gone mainstream with 7-OH.
- No prescription needed, no dealer required.
- This dangerous opioid is sitting on store shelves, making gas stations, smoke shops and convenience stores.
- Available for online purchase.

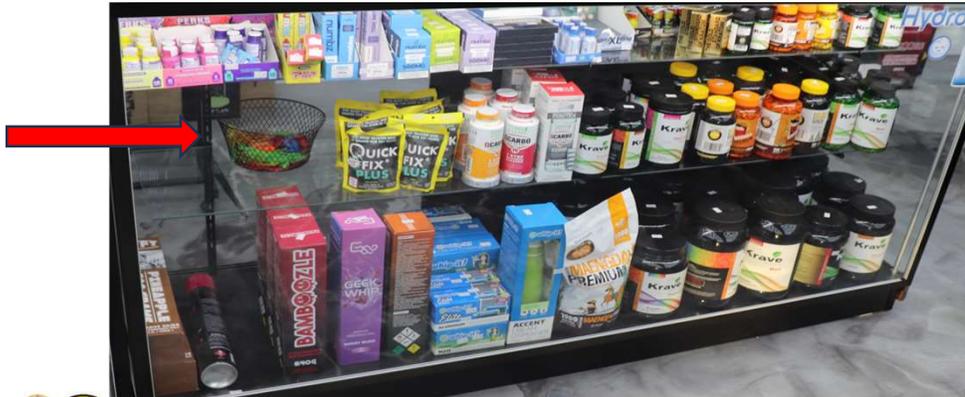



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SMOKE SHOP IN RIVERSIDE

Kratom, NOS, 7-OH products along with synthetic urine
Balloons on second shelf to ingest NOS



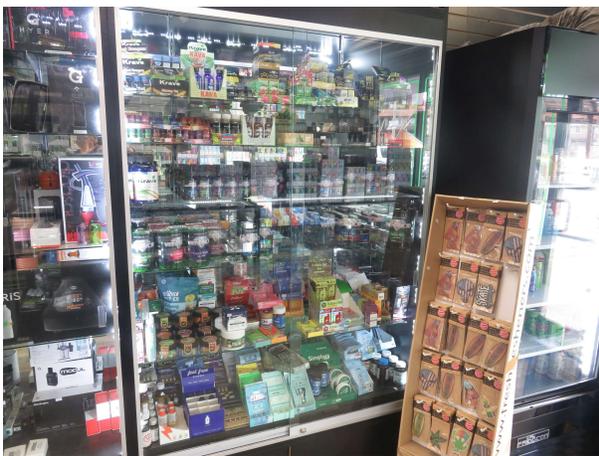
Picture Taken
January 2026



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KRATOM



Common display of kratom products for sale in Smoke Shops throughout the City



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KRATOM ENERGY DRINK AT GAS STATION

- No identification was requested at the time of purchase.
- This product was displayed next to other energy-enhancing beverages.
- Cautions listed on the can state not to combine with alcohol or to be used while operating a motor vehicle.
- Product lists 18 years or older to purchase and 21 years old where applicable.
- Picture taken January 2026



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REGIONAL KRATOM ORDINANCES

- Riverside County Ordinance No. 1004 (Oct 2025)
 - No kratom sales to person under 21 years old
 - Prohibits the sale, distribution, or possession of kratom and products exceeding 2% 7-OH concentration
 - No packaging marketing that are attractive to children
 - Prohibits sale of products containing synthetic or semi-synthetic kratom alkaloids
 - Age verification required at point of sale
- La Quinta (2026), Anaheim (2026), Huntington Beach (2025), Laguna Niguel (2025), Murrieta (2026), and Buena Park (2026) adopted ordinances regulating the sale and distribution of kratom products similar the County
- Cities of San Diego (2016), Oceanside (2016), Stanton (2025), Temecula(2026), and Newport Beach (2024) banned kratom completely



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PROPOSED ORDINANCE

- Add section 9.04.325 to Title 9 of the Riverside Municipal Code Prohibiting the Sale and Distribution of Kratom Products
- Amend Chapter 6.24 of the Riverside Municipal Code to prohibit kratom sales at tobacco retail establishments



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COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

February 18, 2026 - The Safety, Wellness, and Youth Committee, with all members present, considered the proposed ordinance amending Title 9 of the Riverside Municipal Code to either regulate or prohibit the sale and distribution of kratom products and unanimously moved to prohibit the sale and distribution of kratom entirely in the City and forward the recommendation to the City Council for final consideration



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RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council introduce and subsequently adopt an ordinance amending Title 6 and Title 9 of the Riverside Municipal Code by amending Section 6.24.080 regarding other requirements and prohibitions and adding section 9.04.235 regarding prohibiting the sale and distribution of kratom products within the City of Riverside.

