

# Sheriff



**Larry Ashley, Okaloosa County Sheriff**

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## OCSO SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND LOCAL BUSINESSES COOPERATE ON "GOLD STAR RETAILER" CAMPAIGN



Fifty-two convenience stores in Okaloosa County have now signed on to an Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office "Gold Star Retailer" campaign designed to stop the sale of synthetic drugs and warn residents of the dangers those drugs pose.

Deputies have contacted convenience stores across the county, asking businesses to sign an agreement to NOT sell synthetic drugs. Those that agree are then provided a poster to display so that they can notify patrons of that decision.

Here is a sample of the agreement's contents:  
*J.W. Huffman the chemist who initially synthesized these substances "warns against consumption of synthetic marijuana products such as K-2 or "Spice" that are made from recipes published in his research papers, saying that they can cause hypertension, tachycardia, and "serious and unpredictable psychological effects . . . anybody who uses them is playing Russian roulette."*

*Cited as an "imminent threat to public safety" by the DEA*

**The Okaloosa County Sheriff Office seeks your participation along with the Attorney General's Office, Florida Department of Law Enforcement your local Chamber of Commerce and our agency in the "Partners for Substance Free Okaloosa" program working to ensure these substances are not available for purchase in our community. Through participation in the program you will be recognized as a business committed to the safety and wellbeing of our community, and can proudly display a sign on your establishment advertising your participation in the program and denouncing the sale and use of these substances.**

"We want to thank all the business owners and managers who are on board with this public safety program. Ridding our store shelves of these dangerous products is an ongoing goal of our agency and we are grateful for the cooperation of these businesses. In addition, other stores are currently working through their corporate headquarters to join this partnership," said Sheriff Larry Ashley.

Since January 2012, the Okaloosa Multi-Agency Drug Task Force has worked diligently to investigate the sale of these illegal substances. To date the unit has executed nearly two dozen search warrants, made six arrests, and handled more than sixty undercover buys of illegal synthetic drugs from local businesses. They have also seized more than \$625,000 in monies and \$2.9 million dollars in inventory.



The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office is accredited by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

"The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate"