



## **Omega Laboratories Announces Synthetic Marijuana and Bath Salts Drugs of Abuse Testing Utilizing Oral Fluid**

MOGADORE, Ohio, Aug. 8, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- Omega Laboratories, Inc. announced today that it now offers testing for Synthetic Marijuana (Spice, K2, Blaze) and Bath Salts through oral fluid analysis. As most standard drug tests typically do not detect the use of Synthetic Marijuana and Bath Salts, Omega joins the ranks of a few select labs that have the ability to test for these substances.

The capacity to test for **Synthetic Marijuana** (street names **Spice, K2, Blaze**) and **Bath Salts** has become increasingly important in recent years as the prevalence of designer drugs continues to rise. The American Association of Poison Control Centers has recognized this growing trend, reporting that 2011 saw over 6,900 phone calls pertaining to synthetic marijuana and over 6,100 calls related to bath salts. These numbers represent, respectively, a growth of 2.4 times the calls regarding Synthetic Marijuana and 20 times the amount of calls regarding Bath Salts recorded in 2010. The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has addressed the growing use of these dangerous drugs by utilizing emergency powers to ban all currently known synthetic marijuana substances in November, 2010. Bath Salts were met with a similar DEA ban in late 2011. Subsequently, the federal government signed the Synthetic Drug Abuse Prevention Act into law on July 9, 2012. As such, it is currently illegal to produce, possess, or ingest Synthetic Marijuana and Bath Salts in the United States.

Synthetic Marijuana (often referred to by product names such as Spice, K2, and Blaze) represents a dangerous and rising trend within the United States. Originally misrepresented and sold as incense, internet sources instruct users to smoke these substances for what they described as a "legal high." According to authorities in the United States, Synthetic Marijuana is created by taking plant-based substances and spraying them with toxic chemicals which mimic the effects of marijuana. Currently identified health risks include stroke, catatonia, and temporary paralysis.

Bath Salts refer to a group of specific and hazardous synthetic stimulants. These designer drugs are sold disguised as bathwater additives under names such as Purple Wave, Bliss, and Vanilla Sky. Users take these drugs orally, nasally, and intravenously, and the effects are known to vary widely. Law enforcement officials have stated that those under the influence of Bath Salts often become violent and can cause severe harm to themselves and others. Bath Salts are currently believed to pose significant health risks such as heart attack and stroke.

"Omega's primary concern has always been to ensure public safety," said Dr. John Vitullo, CEO of Omega Laboratories.

"The addition of Synthetic Marijuana and Bath Salts to our testing options demonstrates that Omega is committed to keeping up with current trends and the needs of the drug abuse testing industry."

Omega's testing for Synthetic Marijuana and Bath Salts will utilize samples collected via oral fluid swabs, and testing will cover a recent usage timeframe, or roughly 24-48 hours. A list of the specific substances these tests cover can be located at the Omega Laboratories website. <http://www.omegalabs.net/>

**About Omega Laboratories, Inc.** - Omega Laboratories, Inc. is a state-of-the-art facility providing laboratory-based hair and oral fluid testing for drugs of abuse to over 5,000 clients worldwide. Omega currently holds ISO/IEC 17025 and CAP Hair accreditations, as well as screening clearances from the FDA. Omega's reputation for performing accurate, timely and cost effective testing, coupled with an unmatched reputation for client service, has positioned Omega as the leader in the alternative specimen drug testing industry.

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<http://www.omegalabs.net/>

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