

Washington issues flavored vaping ban, joining other states

September 27 2019, by Gene Johnson

Washington on Friday joined several other states in banning the sale of flavored vaping products amid concern over the mysterious lung illness that has sickened hundreds of people and killed about a dozen across the country.

Gov. Jay Inslee issued an executive order asking the Department of Health to issue the emergency rule at its next meeting, scheduled for Oct. 9. The ban will apply to [products](#) containing nicotine as well as the cannabis extract THC. Inslee said the flavored products especially appeal to youth.

"We need to act for the public health of our people," said Inslee, a Democrat. "I'm confident this executive order will save lives."

The ban is necessary because even if a [vaping](#) ingredient or compound were conclusively linked to the illnesses, the state would have no way to identify which products contain the substance so they could be removed from store shelves, Inslee said.

President Donald Trump has said he plans to ban flavored vaping products nationally. New York, Michigan and Rhode Island are among the states that have announced at least temporary bans, while officials in Oregon and California have urged consumers to stop using them. Massachusetts has gone the farthest, issuing a four-month ban on all vaping products—flavored or not.

Inslee also ordered health officials to work with the state's Liquor and Cannabis Board to develop legislation to increase oversight of vapor products, including requiring the disclosure of ingredients and increasing spending on anti-vaping campaigns aimed at teens.

More than 500 cases of the illness have been reported across the U.S. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is investigating but has not yet identified a common product or ingredient as the culprit.

This week, Juul Labs, the San Francisco-based company that controls about 70% of the vaping market, announced it is replacing its CEO and will no longer run TV, print or digital advertisements for its e-cigarettes. The company also promised not to lobby against a proposed U.S. ban on flavors.

Symptoms of the vaping illness can include chest pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, fever and weight loss.

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