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DPHHS officials warn Montanans against using e-cigs

Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) officials are raising concerns over the increased use of electronic cigarettes by Montanans, in particular the rise in usage among high school students.

Latest statistics show that 50 percent of Montana high school students report having tried an electronic vapor product and 30 percent report currently using them.

Health officials also add that poison control center calls in the U.S. related to e-cigarettes have increased significantly; from 460 calls in 2012 to over 3,000 in 2015. The majority of these calls involve children under the age of five.

The public should be aware of the rapid increase use of e-cigarettes by youth,” DPHHS Director Richard Opper said. “And, it’s very important to know that this is a product currently unregulated and contains nicotine, which we all know is a very addictive substance.”

And, e-cigarettes can contain dangerous chemicals and have been linked to explosions that have caused serious injury.

See recent Montana coverage:

<http://www.abcfoxmontana.com/video?clipId=12187655&autostart=true>

Opper also noted that retailers are prohibited from selling or distributing alternative nicotine products, or vapor products to individuals under the age of 18 years, whether over the counter, by vending machine, or otherwise.

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