



# Department of Justice

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Northern District of New York

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## **OWNER OF TEBBS HEADSHOPS PLEADS GUILTY IN FEDERAL COURT TO SALE OF BATH SALTS**

Syracuse, NY—United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian announced that JOHN TEBBETTS, 33, of, Floyd, NY, pled guilty today in U.S. District Court in Syracuse to possession with the intent to distribute controlled substances, controlled substance analogues, and engaging in a monetary transaction in property derived from specified unlawful activity.

As part of his plea, TEBBETTS admitted to owning several Tebbs Head shops in Central New York and Maine, including two in the city of Syracuse and one in Oneida, New York. He also admitted using a warehouse on East Dominic St. in Rome, New York to store these controlled substances. TEBBETTS admitted that he possessed the Schedule I controlled substances: AM-2201, JWH-122, JWH-203, and JWH-250, all synthetic cannabinoids (commonly referred to as "Spice" or "K2", and marketed by Tebbetts as 'Legal Phunk') with the intent to distribute these products. TEBBETTS also admitted to possessing controlled substance analogues (synthetic cathinones, commonly known as "Bath salts", and distributed by Tebbetts as 'Clear' and 'Amped') with the intent to distribute them and intending that these substances be used for human consumption. Lastly, TEBBETTS admitted to purchasing a 2012 motor home for over \$157,000.00 with cash proceeds from his illegal sale of controlled substances and controlled substance analogues. TEBBETTS faces up to a twenty year term of imprisonment on each of five drug counts, up to ten years for a single money laundering count and a fine of up to \$5,250,000.00. Sentencing is scheduled for April 29, 2013 in U.S. District Court.

As part of his plea, TEBBETTS also agreed to forfeit \$314,000 in cash along with six vehicles, including the motor home, a 2004 Toyota Scion, 2009 Cadillac CTS, (2) 2005 GMC trucks, and a 2009 Arctic Cat and trailer.

DEA Special Agent in Charge Brian R. Crowell stated, "This is a prime example of adult drug dealers luring our youth into dangerous and deadly drug use. Bath salts are marketed as innocuous to teens who will try this dangerous drug sold in head shops and not sold by the corner drug dealer. However, Tebbetts is a drug dealer, disguised as a business selling Bath salts, Spice and K2 over the counter, knowing full well these controlled substances would be ingested by teens and young adults. DEA is committed to increasing the awareness of the dangers of these man made drugs that have zero legitimate use – using synthetic cathinones just one time may be your last time."

U.S. Attorney Richard S. Hartunian praised the investigative agencies for their efforts, He stated " The dangers to public health and to police officers responding to those under the influence of bath salts that we witnessed this past summer has been significantly reduced due to the hard work and commitment of these law enforcement agencies."

This prosecution resulted from an investigation undertaken in the spring of 2012 by the Syracuse Resident Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Central New York HIDTA, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), New York State Police, Syracuse Police Department, Onondaga County Sheriffs Department, Onondaga County District Attorney's Office, Auburn Police Department, Oneida County Sheriffs Department, Rome Police Department, Oneida Police Department, and the Jefferson County Drug Task Force.

Further questions or inquiries may be directed to Assistant United States Attorney Carla Freedman, the prosecutor handling the case, at (315) 448-0672.

- 3 -

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