

# Up in SMOKE

**New testing methods are cutting some of the drug dangers on site.**

In recent times Australia has become a destination for purveyors of Synthetic Marijuana a vegetable like material, commonly known as Kronic, sprayed with dangerous chemicals and later smoked.

Producing a similar or mimic effect to use of marijuana, it is now considered a dangerous product and responsible for serious psychosis with potential for prolonged effects.

The two main chemicals JWH 018 and JWH 073 in various forms and five other substances are sprayed on to a vegetable like material, sometimes referred to as "Herbal Incense".

Interestingly manufacturers of the substance continually change and alter the contents with levels of JWH 018 sometimes varying from 0.2% to 3% and other substances making the substance difficult to detect.

Recent studies indicate that use of Kronic is causing amongst other conditions heart attacks, convulsions, paranoia, anxiety, racing heartbeat, elevated blood pressure and vomiting.

Since 2011 West Australia Government have made the substance illegal other states are following and banning the substance.

The substances found in Kronic are banned from importation in Australia. Final ratification on the illegality of the substance is yet to be reached.

Sadly Kronic has become the drug of choice for many and is used

in Australian workplaces, possibly due to the existing uncertainty surrounding the legal status.

Whilst considered a banned substance Kronic is not listed in Australian Standards 4308 : 2008 like Marijuana, Opiates, Amphetamine, Methamphetamine, Cocaine and Benzodiazepines.

Until recently (early 2013) Kronic was unable to be detected Onsite using conventional Immunoassay urine drug screening devices for the detection of THC/marijuana.

The only option available for employers was by Q trap Confirmatory testing using LC/MS – MS (liquid chromatography and mass spectrometry in tandem) method.

Completely different from conventional GC/MS (gas chromatography and mass Spectrometry Confirmatory) testing.

Proving to be an expensive option with costs ranging from \$100 to \$120 per test. Coupled with the lag time for results notification dependent upon the location and proximity to Confirmatory Laboratory.

However one company is now offering a cost effective viable second option.

A simple easy to use on-site Urine based test.

Following a conventional urine drug screen, using the LaneWorkSafe Split Specimen Cup, which produces



a Negative result, further testing for Kronic are able to use the same collected specimen for Kronic testing.

According to the company a tester simply has to remove the screw cap from the Split Cup and place the Kronic kit into the specimen for 30 seconds and remove and lay flat. With slightly longer result times 5 to 6 minutes, than the Split Cup a C or Control line will appear, indicating

the kit is working correctly.

For Negative results a line will appear alongside the letter T indicating a clear Kronic free specimen.

As a presumptive result, minimising the number of specimens requiring Confirmatory testing, the cost effectiveness is considerable.

At the present time there is no Saliva device available for the detection of Kronic.