

County of Santa Clara

Office of the District Attorney

70 West Hedding Street, West Wing, 5th Floor
San Jose, California 95110
(408) 299-7400



Jeffrey F. Rosen
District Attorney

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Community Safety Alert: Fentanyl Overdose Deaths

The District Attorney's Office is joining your school district to ring the alarm about the deadly dangers of the drug, fentanyl. We need your attention. We need your help. Fentanyl overdoses are taking the lives of many members of our community, especially our young people. Students face many stressors in their life, particularly during the pandemic. They may turn to drugs and abuse prescription pills – such as fentanyl or fentanyl-spiked drugs - to self-treat their anxiety and stress. Tasteless, odorless, inexpensive, a single pill – up to 100 times more potent than morphine – could kill them. There are safe, proven, and effective ways to improve our children's mental health, to sooth their anxieties. Let's team up, spread the word, and stop the overdoses.

"When my Office prosecutes, it's too late," DA Jeff Rosen said. "As parents, teachers, administrators, good neighbors, we can literally save lives with vigilance, empathy, and knowledge about the fatal dangers of fentanyl."

Fentanyl is an extremely powerful, synthetic opioid that can be 50 times stronger than heroin. It is extremely addictive and can be deadly. Increasingly, illegal drugs including methamphetamine and cocaine as well as prescription drugs, such as Xanax, are being mixed or "laced" with fentanyl. People take these drugs or pills – not knowing they are laced with fentanyl – overdose, and – far too often - die.

Santa Clara County is closely monitoring the number of recorded fentanyl deaths. What we see is devastating. In 2019, the County recorded 27 deaths. This rose in 2020 to 88 dead. As of August 31, 2021, the County has recorded 53 confirmed deaths, on pace to exceed last year's deathly statistic.

There is hope. Please visit the County's Behavioral Health Services [website](#) for more information on substance use prevention and treatment or scan the code below with your smartphone. More information about fentanyl can be found [here](#).

The District Attorney's Office will continue to investigate and prosecute those who illegally sell or furnish drugs, including fentanyl, when their recklessness harm and kill. We will not stand by as our children are being poisoned. We will stand together.

Edward Liang
Supervising Deputy District Attorney, Narcotics Unit

