

what's trending?

ALCOHOL & DRUGS IN GREAT FALLS & CASCADE COUNTY

February 2025, Issue 2

2025 IS TAPPING IN!

FREE Signs for Businesses That Serve or Sell Alcohol!



Attention Montana businesses that sell or serve alcohol: It's time to refresh your resources for the new year! The Montana Alcohol Beverage Control Division (ABCD) is offering **FREE** 2025 signs, resource calendars, posters and more to support your establishment. Don't miss this opportunity to stay informed and compliant. [Click here](#) to explore available materials and place your order today!

Should Alcohol Carry Cancer Warnings? The Surgeon General Thinks So.



The U.S. Surgeon General has issued an advisory highlighting the link between alcohol consumption and an increased risk of cancer. Dr. Vivek Murthy emphasized that **alcohol is the third leading preventable cause of cancer** in the U.S., responsible for nearly 100,000 cases and 20,000 deaths annually.

He noted that alcohol consumption is associated with at least **seven types of cancer, including breast, colorectal, esophageal, liver, mouth, throat and voice box cancers**. The Surgeon General recommends updating alcohol beverage labels to include prominent warnings about these cancer risks.

This advisory aims to raise public awareness about the dangers of alcohol-related cancers and encourage individuals to make informed decisions regarding alcohol consumption. The Surgeon General's office is working to implement these recommendations, which may require legislative approval. [READ MORE.](#)

Vaping Without Nicotine Still Damages Lungs



A new study shows that **vaping, even without nicotine, can harm your lungs right away**. Researchers found that vaping lowers the amount of oxygen your lungs can take in, similar to the effects of smoking. Using advanced imaging, the study revealed that vaping causes airway irritation and inflammation, likely from **chemicals in e-cigarettes—not just nicotine**. Experts are urging caution, warning that **vaping isn't a safe alternative to smoking** and its long-term health risks are still unclear. [READ MORE.](#)

A Flavor Ban: Lessons Montana Can Take from Washington



Washington State is considering a comprehensive ban on flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes, flavored e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches, to combat youth tobacco use and address health disparities. This proactive approach targets the tobacco industry's marketing tactics, which disproportionately affect youth and marginalized communities. Montana has an

opportunity to take a stand against underage nicotine addiction by implementing measures similar to Washington's to protect public health and ensure a safer future for our youth. Closing gaps in tobacco control policies will help reduce the accessibility and appeal of flavored products, which disproportionately target and harm young people in our communities. [READ MORE.](#)

Big Tobacco Quietly Slipping into the Marijuana Market



Philip Morris International (PMI), the largest tobacco company in the world, is quietly slipping into the cannabis market and it raises serious concerns. While they tout their entry into medical cannabis as a move toward health and wellness, it's hard to ignore the underlying motives. PMI, a company built on the back of tobacco, is simply pivoting from one harmful product to another, trying to capitalize on the growing cannabis industry while masking their true intentions. This feels more like a

strategic business move to tap into a profitable market rather than a genuine concern for public health. [READ MORE.](#)

Phenibut: A Legal Drug with Unregulated Risks



Phenibut, a legal but unregulated substance marketed as a "dietary supplement," is quietly gaining traction across the U.S., promoted for its anti-anxiety and cognition-enhancing effects. Originally developed in Russia, this inexpensive depressant has penetrated communities nationwide, thriving within drug culture and raising concerns about its accessibility. Despite its growing popularity, Phenibut largely evades regulatory scrutiny,

even as it becomes a staple in drug-oriented stores. Experts and advocates are urging a closer examination of its prevalence and impact, highlighting the urgent need for proactive

THC Overload: Violent Outburst After Vaping



A Florida had a violent outburst after smoking a high-potency THC vape pen, leading to him getting naked and stabbing his father in the stomach. He also assaulted his mother, causing a head injury. He now faces charges of attempted murder and aggravated battery with a deadly weapon. A judge has ordered a mental health screening to evaluate his state of mind during the incident. This case highlights the potential risks of high-potency THC, which can lead to severe behavioral changes, including aggression, paranoia and impaired judgment, especially for individuals who may be more vulnerable to its effects. [READ MORE.](#)

Rising Evidence Links Marijuana Use to Depression & Suicide in Youth



Experts warn that stronger cannabis products and expanded legalization are fueling an increase in mental health issues among youth, with research showing a direct connection to higher suicide and depression rates. With cannabis use on the rise, particularly in states with legalized recreational use, the need for targeted prevention and early intervention has never been more urgent. [READ MORE.](#)



FREE No Smoking, Vaping or Marijuana signs

These 5" x 7" window signs are ideal for your business or organization entrance doors. Ensure that your staff and customers are aware of the regulations. This will greatly reduce the likelihood of having to confront individuals who breach the law on your premises, a situation that is not enjoyable and can be volatile.

[Click here to order your FREE signs.](#)

Note: This is a new sign vendor. You will need to create an account, but it's pretty straightforward to get through the steps to order FREE signs.

Tune in to the **January 2025** episode of the ***What's Trending?*** podcast on 89.9 KGPR, proudly supported by [Great Falls/Cascade County Crimestoppers](#). In this episode, we cover the latest trends in drug and alcohol use in our community. [Click here](#) to listen now!

What's Trending?

A look at drug and alcohol trends happening
in Great Falls and Cascade County



Cascade County Substance Abuse Prevention Alliance
Alliance for Youth
Great Falls/Cascade County Crimestoppers



What's Trending at the 2025 Montana Legislature has been sending out legislative alerts several times a week! Stay informed on legislation that will impact us all. Don't forget to share this with others and encourage them to contact their legislators. Your voice matters, so take action today to influence the laws that affect our community.



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