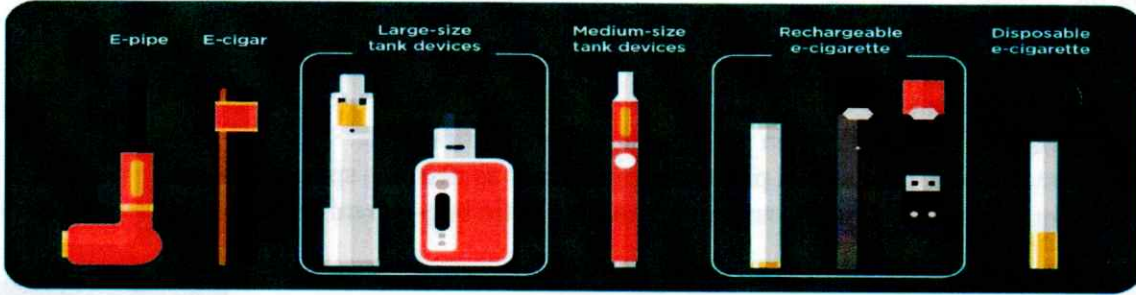




A Note From DTF and HIDTA

Vape Pens/Cartridges

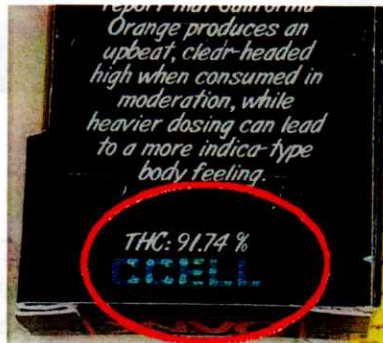
THC vape pens/cartridges have become more and more prevalent in the Minnesota and Wisconsin area. Vape pens and cartridges come in many different forms:



What are “vape pens” and “e-cigarettes”?

Electronic Cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and vaporizer pens use a battery powered heating element that heats the liquid in the cartridge, creating an aerosol. The aerosol is then inhaled and exhaled. The particulates can also be breathed in by bystanders when the user exhales.

The liquid used usually contains nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals. Vape pens and e-cigs can also be used with marijuana via plant material or concentrated oils.



“Vaporable cannabis products present potentially more risks than using nicotine. 100% natural cannabis oil is a thick and gooey substance. In order to get the “oil” to the point where it can respond to the vape pen heating coils, its viscosity must be diluted by manufacturers by adding a, potentially toxic, thinning agent. Polyethylene and propylene glycol (traditionally the “agents of choice” for thinning straight cannabis oil), are known to break down into carcinogenic polymers such as ethylene oxide when heated. Other potentially harmful thinning agent byproducts include carbonyls such as formaldehyde, a group 1 carcinogen, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer.” - HIDTA’s recent bulletin

As vaping becomes more and more popular with juveniles, it is important for officers, and especially SRO’s to be aware that vape pens and e-cigs are often disguised as USB thumb drives, pens, cellphone cases, etc. they are often very hard to recognize by just looking at them.



The Boulder Rock is 4.8 inches and resembles a flash drive with a USB port.

The Just Fog Minifit, small and easy to conceal, is billed by one website as “ideal for stealthy vaping.”

The Smok Novo is 3 inches and resembles a lighter.

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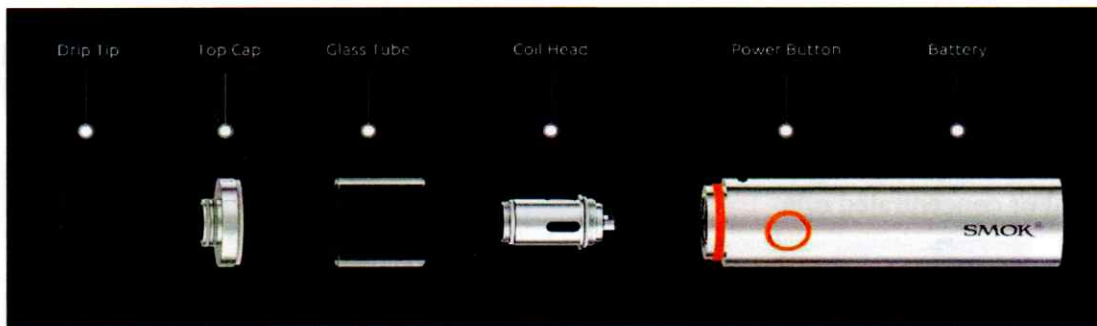


Safety Concerns—

- ◆ Besides health based safety concerns, the actual device itself is known to start fires or explode.
- ◆ Disposable units are capable of exploding while being used or when their stored in a purse or bag.
- ◆ Although removing a battery in the device seems like the safest way, it's possible the device has an internal battery also, leaving the device operational.

How to avoid a fire hazard while the pen or cartridge is stored in an evidence locker

- ◆ Remove the battery from the unit
- ◆ Power off the unit. Most are turned off when pressing the power button once.
- ◆ If the battery cannot be shut off, package in plastic bag— identify as needing special storage
- ◆ If the battery cannot be separated from the cartridge, seal in plastic bag— identify as needing special storage



Evidence tips:

- ◆ The commercial packaging is a highly important piece of evidence. Most THC cartridge packaging clearly identifies the THC vape cartridge as containing THC, along with a THC concentration percentage (see photo). If located, make sure to either collect the THC identifying packaging OR take photos of it and include them in your case file. Make sure in your report to state that the THC cartridge packaging was located, and clearly identifies the cartridge as containing THC oil and the THC concentration is ??%
- ◆ Ask the Subject if the oil in the cartridge is THC. Regular vape juices and CBD oil are also available in the same style cartridges. LEO's need to investigate further and look for this extra, supporting evidence.
- ◆ Field test the oil with a regular THC field test kit and document the result in your report.

******Word of caution: CBD will test positive in a THC field test kit, because THC and CBD plants are of the same family. CBD is allowed to contain 0.3 % or less THC concentration. The Wisconsin State Crime Lab WILL NOT do quantitative testing (%), to determine if a sample falls within legal parameters. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture does do quantitative (%) testing, but only for licensed growers, as part of the licensure program. They WILL NOT do testing for LEA's in criminal cases.*****

Any additional questions on how to package vape pens, e-cigarettes or their cartridges, please contact a DTF agent for more details.