



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Senator Ritchie to Host Telephone Town Hall on 'Bath Salts'

PATTY RITCHIE July 20, 2012

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CLICK HERE NOW TO SUBMIT YOUR BATH SALTS QUESTION OR COMMENT TO THE EXPERT

State Senator Patty Ritchie will host a live telephone Town Hall meeting Monday evening to give Central and Northern New Yorkers a chance to ask an expert about the growing problem of "bath salts," synthetic drug compounds that are at the center of a series of increasingly bizarre and deadly incidents across the region.

The free event, which begins at 6:35 PM, will feature a certified drug counselor from the Jefferson County Alcohol and Substance Abuse Council, Anita Seefried-Brown, who, in addition to holding certifications in substance abuse prevention, also serves as a prevention counselor in numerous schools across the region. Ms. Seefried-Brown is currently working to organize three free sessions at Jefferson Community College on Aug. 8th (day and evening), and Aug. 15th for first responders, medical personnel and concerned citizens to learn more about the dangers, prevention and treatment of bath salt abuse.

Participants in Senator Ritchie's Town Hall meeting will be able to ask questions during the event, but are also invited to submit comments beforehand on a [special webpage](#). ([CLICK HERE](#))

"Bath salts are accessible and cheap, and they have defied efforts to keep them off store shelves and out of reach of children," said Senator Ritchie. "Their abuse is an increasingly serious problem across rural Upstate New York that has resulted in bizarre cases of violence, and even death."

"By providing an opportunity through this Town Hall meeting for more people to learn about the dangers, the warning signs and ways to prevent abuse, it is my hope that we can stop this epidemic, and save lives." Senator Ritchie will invite tens of thousands of residents of Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties to join the Town Hall meeting, by calling their homes beginning at about 6:35 PM.

The problem of bath salts has become so serious that the Army recently launched a major crackdown on abusers, and it recently drew the attention of the state Attorney General, who sued 16 businesses, including stores in our region, to get the products off the shelves.

Recent cases involving bath salts have included a man who police say held a knife to the throat of a stranger's son, a gun-wielding man on top of a roof, and another who was acting strangely before he fell into the Oneida River and drowned.

Senator Ritchie is a sponsor, along with Assemblyman Will Barclay, of anti-bath salt legislation (S.6717), and a new law to prevent the sale of dangerous imitation drugs went into effect last year, yet sales persist.