



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH News Release

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Larry Hogan, Governor - Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor – Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Carfentanil determined present in three fatal overdose cases

1 Frederick, 2 Anne Arundel residents dead. Help at MdDestinationRecovery.org

Baltimore, MD (April 21, 2017) – The Opioid Operational Command Center is raising awareness of carfentanil threat to Maryland communities after three residents in Anne Arundel and Frederick counties died in apparent overdoses from the synthetic opioid.

“Carfentanil is the latest in a string of deadly drugs that have exacted a horrible toll on residents in Maryland and across the country,” said Maryland Department of Health and Mental Secretary Dennis R. Schrader. Last September, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency [issued a warning](#) to law enforcement and the public about carfentanil, a synthetic opioid that is 10,000 times deadlier than morphine and 100 times deadlier than fentanyl, which is 50 times deadlier than heroin.”

“The risk in using these drugs cannot be overstated,” said Public Health Services Deputy Secretary Howard Haft. “We want Marylanders who struggle with substance use disorders to know they can find location-based treatment resources at MdDestinationRecovery.org or via the 24/7 Maryland Crisis Hotline, 1-800-422-0009, before it’s too late.”

The effort to raise awareness and to lend all appropriate support to local government agencies is central to the work of the Opioid Operational Command Center, formed earlier this year when Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan declared a state of emergency to better combat the opioid epidemic here and to cut through red tape to foster more effective agency collaboration.

“The Command Center will continue to work with our counties’ health departments and emergency management offices to help make responses and supports more efficient,” said Executive Director Clay Stamp. “At the outset, that means spreading the word to people who might not be aware just how deadly these drugs are.” For information on many of the policies currently implemented to fight substance use disorder and overdose in Maryland, see <http://goo.gl/KvEzQw>. If you know of someone in need of treatment for a substance use disorder, treatment facilities can be located by location and program characteristics on our page at <http://goo.gl/rbGF6S>.

The synthetic opioid carfentanil was detected by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in the performance of autopsies using an assay, a tool that confirms the presence of a substance in a body. “As this crisis has evolved, so have our policies and divisions,” said Schrader.

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The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is the State agency that protects Maryland's public health. We work together to promote and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders through disease prevention, access to care, quality management, and community engagement. Stay connected: www.twitter.com/MarylandDHMH and www.facebook.com/MarylandDHMH.