



The Special Testing and Research Laboratory's Emerging Trends Program compiled the data for this report through a query of archived seizure and analysis information from drug evidence analyzed by the Drug Enforcement Administration's laboratory system. This data is representative of drug evidence seized and analyzed in the date ranges annotated. This is not a comprehensive list of all new psychoactive substances and is not representative of all evidence analyzed by DEA. This data is an annual snapshot of the new psychoactive substance market in the United States.

The term new psychoactive substance (NPS) describes a recently emerged drug that may pose a public health threat. This includes synthetic cannabinoids, substituted cathinones, phenethylamines, opioids, tryptamines, benzodiazepines, and a variety of other chemical classes. Due to the increase in seizures over the last several years, fentanyl is also included in this report.

An identification is made when authenticated reference material is available for comparison. When reference material is not available, the drug evidence is identified as "substance unconfirmed" or "inconclusive." A single unit of drug evidence may have multiple sub-units. For the purposes of this document, each unit of drug evidence counts as one identification regardless of the number of sub-units. Some seized drug evidence contains more than one active ingredient; therefore, more than one identification can be made for a single unit.

SUMMARY

MDMB-4en-PINACA was the most reported synthetic cannabinoid and eutylone was the most reported cathinone in 2021. The most prevalent NPS benzodiazepine in CY2021 was clonazepam. Fentanyl was the most commonly reported opioid.

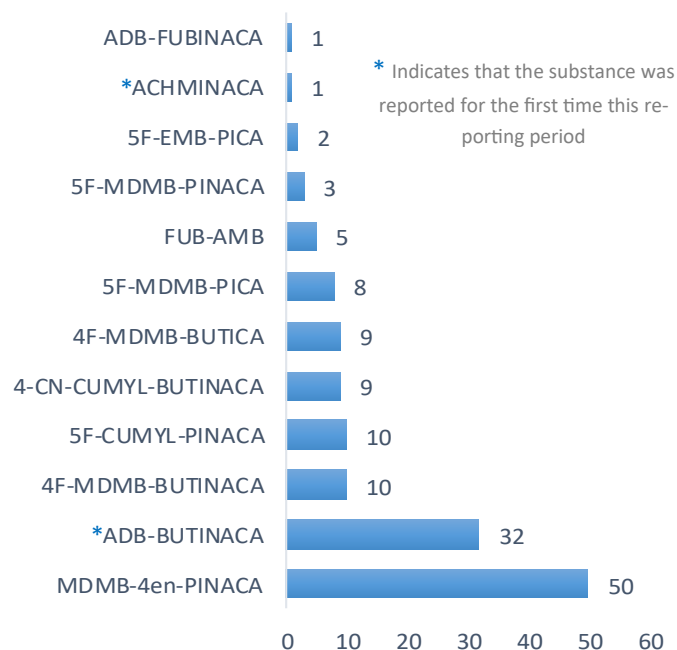
Three classes of NPS saw a significant increase in identifications: cathinones (47%), opioids (54%) and benzodiazepines (24%).

There were 13 substances reported for the first time in CY2021, meaning they had not been encountered for at least the last five years. This equates to one new substance approximately every month. *It should be noted that as backlogged samples are analyzed, the date of the first encounter may change.*

The number of unconfirmed substances reported in CY2021 remains consistent with the CY2020 Emerging Threat Report.

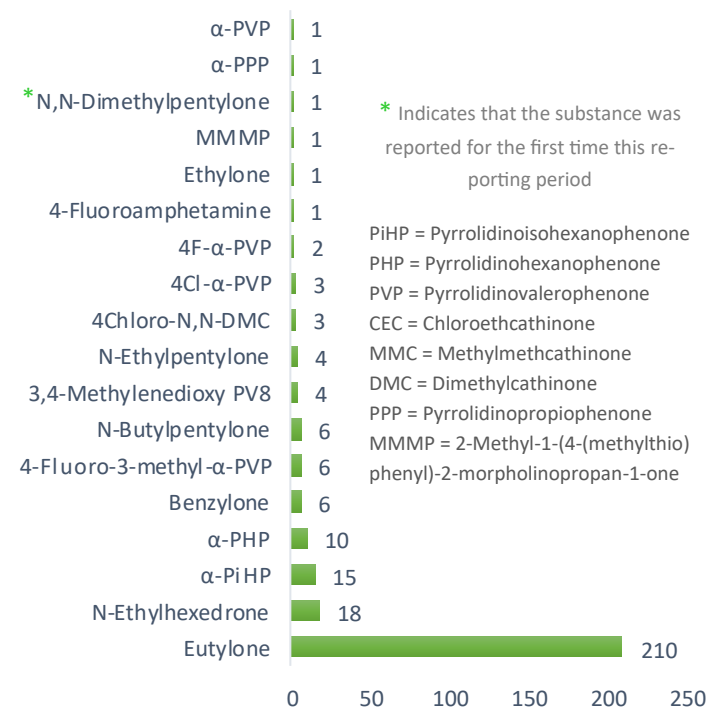
SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS

THERE WERE **140** SYNTHETIC CANNABINOID IDENTIFICATIONS IN CY2021. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE 134 IDENTIFICATIONS IN CY2020. MDMB-4EN-PINACA WAS THE MOST COMMONLY REPORTED SYNTHETIC CANNABINOID ACCOUNTING FOR APPROXIMATELY **36%** OF THE IDENTIFICATIONS.



CATHINONES

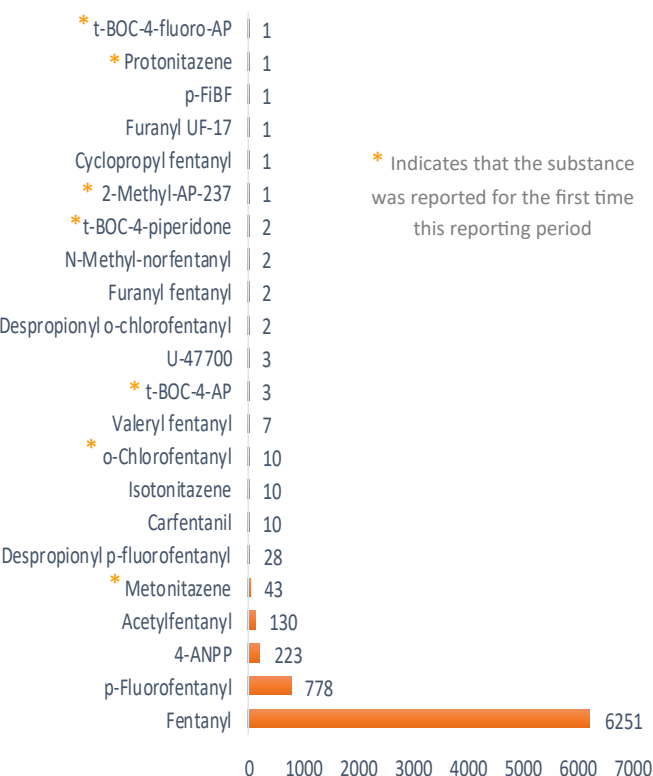
THERE WERE **293** CATHINONE IDENTIFICATIONS THIS REPORTING PERIOD. THIS REPRESENTS AN APPROXIMATELY **47%** INCREASE FROM CY2020. EUTYLONE WAS THE MOST REPORTED CATHINONE, ACCOUNTING FOR APPROXIMATELY **72%** OF THE IDENTIFICATIONS.





OPIOIDS/ANALGESICS

THERE WERE **7510** IDENTIFICATIONS OF FENTANYL, FENTANYL-RELATED COMPOUNDS AND OTHER NEW SYNTHETIC OPIOIDS. THIS ACCOUNTS FOR AN APPROXIMATELY **54%** INCREASE IN IDENTIFICATIONS FROM 2020. FENTANYL ACCOUNTED FOR APPROXIMATELY **83%** OF THE IDENTIFICATIONS. THE NEXT MOST PROMINENT SUBSTANCE, p-FLUOROFENTANYL, ACCOUNTED FOR APPROXIMATELY **10%** OF THE IDENTIFICATIONS. OF THE **6251** FENTANYL IDENTIFICATIONS, FENTANYL WAS FOUND AS THE ONLY CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE IN APPROXIMATELY **63%** OF THE IDENTIFICATIONS AND WAS FOUND WITH HEROIN IN APPROXIMATELY **19%** OF THE IDENTIFICATIONS.



HALLUCINOGENS

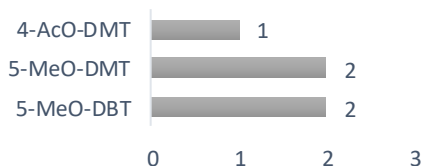
THERE WERE **1** IDENTIFICATION EACH OF 25B-NBOH AND 25C-NBOMe DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD. NO NOVEL HALLUCINOGENS WERE REPORTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN CY 2021.

OTHER

The "other" category includes substances that could not be confirmed, psychoactive plants, PCP related substances, benzofurans, hallucinogens, tryptamines, and amphetamines.

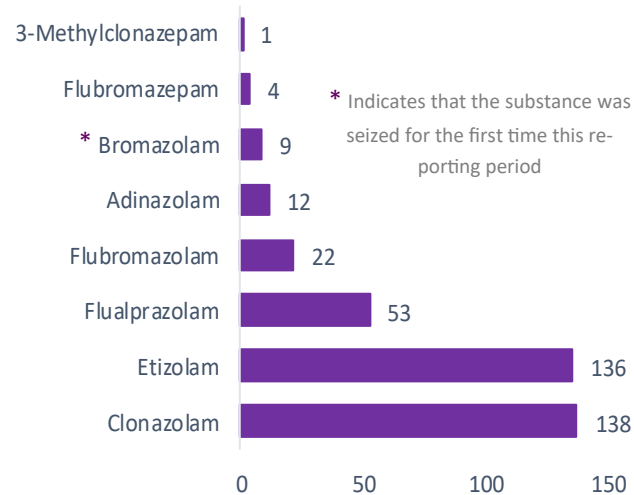
THERE WERE **48** INSTANCES OF INCONCLUSIVE REPORTS DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD. ADDITIONALLY, THERE WERE **6** IDENTIFICATIONS OF 2F-DESCHLOROKETAMINE. N-(1,4-DIMETHYLPENTYL)-3,4-DMA WAS IDENTIFIED **3** TIMES. 4-METHYL-2,5-DIMETHOXYAMPHETAMINE (STP), 4-METHYLPHENIDATE, MITRAGYNINE, AND N,N-DIMETHYLAMPHETAMINE WERE IDENTIFIED **2** TIMES EACH. ADDITIONALLY, 5-MAPB, PHENDIMETRAZINE, AND A SUBSTANCE REPORTED AS "UNKNOWN" WERE REPORTED **1** TIME EACH. 4F-METHYLPHENIDATE WAS REPORTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN CY 2021.

Tryptamines



BENZODIAZEPINES

THERE WERE **375** IDENTIFICATIONS OF DESIGNER BENZODIAZEPINES DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD. THIS REPRESENTS AN APPROXIMATELY **27%** INCREASE FROM CY2020. CLONAZOLAM AND ETIZOLAM WERE THE MOST REPORTED DESIGNER BENZODIAZEPINES ACCOUNTING FOR APPROXIMATELY **73%** OF THE IDENTIFICATIONS.



This completes the 2021 series of reports. Stay tuned for the Mid-Year 2022 Emerging Threat Report!

To be added to our distribution list, please contact us at the email address below.

Questions about this data are welcome and may be directed to the DEA Emerging Trends Program at 703-668-3300 or DEA.Emerging.Trends@usdoj.gov.