

# Sanitizer pulled from Winnipeg store

## Concerns about people drinking it for alcohol content

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A downtown Winnipeg store has pulled large bottles of hand sanitizer from its shelves after people were reportedly buying it to get drunk.

The 750-millilitre bottle of sanitizer at the store was being sold for \$2 and empty bottles with the store's label were being found scattered in areas where addicts are known to drink.

"This would be replacing mouthwash right now [as an over-the-counter intoxicant]," said Wraylyn Black, a supervisor with the Downtown Biz security patrol.

"They seem to purchase it for a low cost of \$2 or they tend to steal it and that's why we can find two to four to five bottles on one individual."

Black has a collection of the empty bottles that have been gathered up by Biz patrol members.

**'They are like little chemists — they're finding ways to make it a liquefied drink and now it is hitting our streets.'**

The store's operators pulled the product after representatives from the Biz and the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) visited this week and advised them of the problem.

—Wraylyn Black, Downtown Biz

Although the sanitizer is sold in a gel form, addicts find ways to thin it into a liquid form, said Black.

"They've caught on to the fact that it has a lot of alcohol in it and they are finding ways. They are like little chemists — they're finding ways to make it a liquefied drink and now it is hitting our streets.

"They figured out what it can do and it is causing some problems."

The Biz, which advocates for downtown businesses and revitalization, police and MLCC are preparing to launch an education campaign for all downtown businesses about the product.

They want retailers to keep the sanitizer in a place where they can have an eye on it, or sell alcohol-free sanitizer.

They are also reminding storeowners that fines under Manitoba's Liquor Control Act for people who knowingly sell hand sanitizer to people intending to ingest it range from \$2,000 to \$20,000.