

# Andy's Market owner destroys Love Roses crack pipes



By David Crigger/Bristol Herald Courier

Andy Huynh, owner of Andy's Market on Commonwealth Avenue in Bristol Va., uses a paint can to smash the "I Love You" roses Tuesday. The novelty items can be used as a crack pipe.

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BRISTOL, Va. – By the time he was done with them Tuesday morning, 36 Love Roses – better known as crack pipes – became a jagged pile of glass and plastic at the bottom of a cardboard box.

Andrew Huynh, owner of Andy's Market on Commonwealth Avenue, said he learned Monday from a Bristol Herald Courier article that the \$1 novelty item he sold from his counter was actually a crack pipe, and its \$3 counterpart is mainly used to smoke meth. He wasn't pleased.

While last week, clerks and a manager at his store readily explained the dubious function of Love Roses, Huynh said no one filled him in.

So Tuesday, he hauled all of the pipes off the counter, dragged out a cardboard box and dropped them in. He used his hands at first to break in half the longer meth pipes. Then shards of glass flew hither and yon as he jabbed the smaller crack pipes with the meth pipe's broken ends. Finally, to finish them off, he produced a can of spray paint and used its butt to chop their remains to bits.

A Love Rose is a 4-inch-long glass tube, sold at convenience stores across the region, and the country, for about \$1. Police say they are used, almost exclusively, as crack pipes. The I Love You Rose, a meth-smoking version, is 6 inches long and has a bulb on the end with a hole in it. Both have identical tiny flowers inside, a ruse to skirt state and federal laws against selling drug paraphernalia.

The Love Roses are labeled simply "Made in China" and give no other indication of origin or manufacturer. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, drug paraphernalia is a multi-billion dollar global industry, with most sales in the United States.

Huynh admits he is so unsophisticated about drug culture that the tube's practical function never occurred to him. He said he's even bought them before, as gifts for his sweethearts.

A manager at the Hillbilly Food Store, too, said they stopped selling the roses, though he again declined to provide his name or additional information.

Huynh estimated that he smashed about \$58 worth of pipes Tuesday, which are delivered to them monthly by a guy in a van. He pledged to his customers – particularly the one that called at 2:18 a.m., angry about the pipes – that he runs a clean business.

"There," he said, still whacking the tubes. "Now they should be all broke."

He peered inside the box – just bits of glass stabbing 36 cheap polyester flowers.

"Oops," he said and plunked the can down one last time. "Missed one."