THE next big controversy on the soaps will occur on NBC's "Another World" as "designer drugs" take center stage.

Designer drugs are chemical copies of heroin substitutes and other substances that are created in makeshift laboratories. They are a problem for law officials because the often fatal drugs are not illegal, since their molecular structure has been altered so it's acceptable by F.D.A. standards.

Another World producer Steven Schenkel says the serial will deal with the subject tastefully, "as part of our regular story.

"One of the plots on the show (played by Nancy Portman) will begin to understand that many teenagers in town are being pressured into trying these drugs," says Schenkel.

Some workings of a drug-related storyline have already been surfaced on the soap, but the real stuff.

Producer Schenkel swears "people will tell it around the community, but in real life it has been proven to cause mental anguish and depression."

"There is a pot of gold," he notes, "with no loss of prime time viewing," saying this stuff is cool.

But another angle won't be added, "plotted," Schenkel says, "the use of designer drugs in go-to High School in junior highs."

It's not just an upper, Schenkel adds, "like in real life."

"It's a lower-class, blue-collar high."

"Explaining that "designer drugs" and it may sell for more of heroin's street price," Schenkel adds, "it's a no brainer (when the axis of their use seen on the show).

"It's on the other side of the world, the world," Schenkel says, "but it's real.

Another World resident Nancy McGowen (played by Jo Cameron) will be the victim of drug abuse in the soap. She's addicted to "Heroin," a "high-spirited, rich girl."

"She is a good person who gets hit by a car and that's enough," Schenkel says.

Liz's son makes Suds debut

By TIM BOXER

ELIZABETH Taylor's 80-year-old son Michael Todd is joining Guiding Light as a regular, starting today at 3 p.m. on CBS.

He'll be playing Jackson Freeman, a record producer who becomes interested in the budding music career of Lujack (Vincent Irizarry).

The role was created especially for him.

The producers are taking their time introducing Todd to Guiding Light viewers.

In a suspenseful plot, you'll see only the back of his head today as he talks on the telephone phone in Sunset Saxon, owner of Della's Records.

She's trying to get him to produce Lujack's record albums.

The record producer will actually show his face in town during the week of July 1.

The Guiding Light serial marks Todd's first recurring TV role. This past season he was featured as Jesus in NBC's A.D. miniseries.

His mom, who is a veteran of two daytime serials, appeared on General Hospital for five days in November 1981 and appeared on All My Children for one day in April 1983.

Elizabeth Taylor's son Michael Todd joins the cast of "Guiding Light" today. His famous mom has appeared on "General Hospital" and "All My Children."

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