

Medical Marijuana Dispensaries and Associated Issues
Presented to the California Chiefs of Police Association
July to September 2007

This report represents a collection of articles and other publications available to the public on the internet. As you will see, crime and health related issues continue to surface in relation to the distribution of marijuana pursuant to Proposition 215 and Senate Bill 420. This report includes information related to crimes associated with “medical” marijuana, marijuana grows, medical concerns, juvenile involvement and related news from other states as well as few opinion pieces on the state of medical marijuana in California today. Excerpts were used in this report for brevity, the full text of articles and other publications used for this report are available on request.

The below listed article excerpts document crimes associated with the distribution of marijuana. We can see that murder, robbery, burglary follow the cultivation and dispensing of marijuana. Enforcement activities involving the dispensaries continue to demonstrate the fraud, greed and money laundering that appears to be rampant in this industry. The word industry is used purposely as there is every appearance that many “entrepreneurs” from doctors, suppliers to dispensary owners are using “medical” marijuana to realize huge profits. Advocates have asserted that legalization will remove the criminal component from drug usage. With the distribution of marijuana for medical purposes we have a partial legalization and it is quite obvious that the associated criminal activity continues and most likely increases. One could assert that legalization partial or otherwise only creates more victims.

Fugitive arrested in Oroville shoot out over medical marijuana

OROVILLE – “The deal went awry, investigators say, when one of the buyers came out of the bathroom, fired a shot into the ceiling and told the sellers to drop to the floor. A seller shot back, and the two men fired 17 bullets. Two of the three buyers were killed in the shootout, along with one of the sellers.”

Source: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/state/20070809-1123-ca-brf-norcal-triplehomicide.html>

Gas station shooting victim killed for his medical marijuana

[Henry K. Lee, Chronicle Staff Writer](#) / Tuesday, July 3, 2007

SAN LEANDRO – “A San Leandro man shot and killed while pumping gas in unincorporated Alameda County had been followed from a medical marijuana club by two men who stole drugs from him before the slaying, authorities said today.”

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/07/03/BAGTQQQNAV5.DTL>

Burned Bodies Found Near Calif. Pot Raid

Associated Press 07.25.07, 3:50 AM ET

INDEPENDENCE, CALIF. – “The burned bodies of two people were found near a marijuana plantation where police discovered 50,000 plants and arrested five people this month, authorities said.”

Source: <http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2007/07/25/ap3948831.html>

Man Regrets Planting Medical Marijuana Patch

Sacramento Police Say Woman Shot Man for Stealing Medical Marijuana

September 28, 2007

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, Calif. -- Police say a woman was trying to protect medical marijuana plants when she shot a 17-year-old trying to steal them.....The man who owns the plants, William DiDomozio, said she fired a warning shot that hit a 17-year-old male. DiDomozio said he would have never grown the pot if he had known it would lead to a shooting. Police said they have seen an increase in the number of crimes associated with both legal and illegal marijuana.

Source: <http://www.my58.com/news/14226017/detail.html>

Arrests Made In Slain PC World Editor Case

PITTSBURG, Calif. -- “Authorities believed that the incident was a targeted attack possibly linked to illegal narcotics. The three men may not have known the family members, but somehow knew there was a substantial amount of marijuana in the home, Addington said. Police found 100 pounds of pot growing in the home, and more than 3 pounds of cultivated marijuana after the robbery.....The couple's son, Sterling Farrance, who did not live with his parents at the time of the attack, said the marijuana was grown for medical purposes.”

Source: <http://www.nbc11.com/news/14205105/detail.html>

Intruder at West Oakland marijuana farm killed

By Harry Harris and William Brand, Staff Writers

OAKLAND _ “An Oakland man who apparently was trying to break into a marijuana-growing facility was shot and killed late Monday by a resident of the facility...police arrested the shooter, a 33-year-old San Pablo resident, on suspicion of murder, being an ex-felon in possession of a handgun and cultivation of marijuana

Source: http://origin.insidebayarea.com/localnews/ci_6678411

Man Found Dead Near Indoor Marijuana Farm

EL CAJON, Calif. -- “The younger Fletcher was already dead, from at least one gunshot wound, said Brugos. Firefighters who were originally called to the scene brought in homicide investigators when they found the body and an indoor marijuana-growing operation

Source: <http://www.10news.com/news/14032120/detail.html>

Robbers roll medical marijuana joint

Daily News

Article Last Updated: 08/23/2007 06:08:25 AM PDT

TARZANA -- “Armed robbers made off with an unspecified amount of marijuana tonight after hitting a medical marijuana dispensary, police said.”

Source: http://www.dailynews.com/ci_6693059?source=most_viewed

Man who held gun on teens won't be charged

TERRY VAU DELL - Staff Writer / Article Launched: 07/12/2007

OROVILLE – “After further investigation: authorities said Wednesday that no criminal charges will be filed against a Helltown Road man who held a gun on two teenagers he suspected of trying to steal his medical marijuana.”

Source: http://www.chicoer.com/news/ci_6355273

SJ: OFFICER ASSAULTED FOLLOWING MARIJUANA GARDEN DISCOVERY

07/05/07 11:20 PDT / SAN JOSE (BCN)

“A man is in jail today after he allegedly attacked a police officer following the discovery of 33 marijuana plants in a San Jose apartment.”

Source: http://cbs5.com/localwire/localnews/bcn/2007/07/05/n/HeadlineNews/POT-BUST/resources_bcn_html

Four Men Arrested For Hiding Marijuana from Crime Scene

MARTINEZ, Calif. Aug. 8, 2007 (BCN) – “Four Martinez men were arrested after they attempted to remove marijuana from the scene of a home invasion robbery in an effort to hide their marijuana growing operation”

Source: <http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=local&id=5550636>

Explosion, home fire lead police to crude drug lab

[CONTRA COSTA TIMES](#) / By Scott Marshall / Article Launched: 08/09/2007

Martinez police arrested a man after a weekend explosion and a small fire led them to a crude drug lab.....The concussion from the explosion was so powerful that nearby residents thought they had felt an earthquake,.....The three said they were making honey oil for a Richmond marijuana dispensary.”

Source: ContraCostaTimes.com: Explosion, home fire lead police to crude drug lab

Marijuana Dealer Reports Stolen Stash

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. (AP) - A marijuana dealer telephoned Santa Cruz police after armed thieves stole his quarter-pound stash of pot. The man told police two men robbed him at gunpoint downtown as he sat in his car Tuesday night....The dealer turned over the marijuana and the robbers fled. He then called police and showed arriving officers a medical marijuana card and explained he was simply holding the pot in his lap. But he got confused about his story. He first told officers he bought it at a medicinal marijuana dispensary, then that he got it from a friend. He finally recanted the story and said he had arranged to sell the marijuana to the men who stole it from him.....

Source: <http://www.kcbs.com/pages/913484.php?contentType=4&contentId=888825>

Medicinal Pot Theft Suspects Caught

“Three men were arrested after they allegedly tried to steal the plants over the weekend of September 8-9. Police said five men with a gun got into the backyard of a home on Oregon Street and began stealing the marijuana plants. The owner confronted one of the men, who threatened to kill him.”

Source: <http://www.turnto23.com/news/14082484/detail.html>

Santa Cruz man busted with 100 pounds of pot and \$500,000 cash pleads no contest, still claims medical use

By JENNIFER SQUIRES / Sentinel Staff Writer / September 14, 2007

SANTA CRUZ — “A Westside man arrested after deputies found 100 pounds of pot in his house and \$500,000 cash in a storage locker pleaded no contest Thursday to charges he possessed and sold the drug, but he remained adamant that most of the marijuana was destined for medicinal users” “Sheriff’s deputies confiscated almost \$900,000 from Hoey, as well as a wine collection valued at least \$250,000 and Oriental rugs worth \$165,000. Hoey, a medicinal user himself, said Thursday the money he was holding included his own compensation for providing pot to the dispensary, payments for growers and cash he’d set aside to pay taxes.”

Source:

<http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/archive/2007/September/14/local/stories/02local.htm>

Bakersfield residents arrested in drug ring

“The charges included conspiracy to distribute meth, cocaine and marijuana. Several agencies were involved including the Drug Enforcement Administration in town and it targeted two drug trafficking organizations and a violent gang within the state prison system. As we showed you yesterday, Connelly runs Seven Seas a medical marijuana dispensary and feels he’s being unfairly targeted because he was trying to see his store and somehow got tied up in this drug raid.”

Source: <http://www.eyeforyou.com/news/local/8444487.html>

POT DISPENSARY RAIDED AGAIN

by Jason Kotowski, Californian staff writer, 16 Jul 2007

“Federal drug agents busted an Oildale marijuana dispensary for the second time in three months, seizing more than 87 pounds of processed marijuana and arresting five people. The business had done \$9.6 million in sales in nine months....Records indicate 1,500 pounds of marijuana were purchased by the dispensary between December 2005 and April 2006, the news release said.” “Taylor said it’s been his experience that owners of marijuana dispensaries, or “pot clubs,” as he calls them, are solely interested in making money. “(Dispensary owners) will contend that they’re only interested in helping the sick and terminally ill,” Taylor said. “For the most part, we’re finding the contrary.”

Source: <http://mapinc.org/norml/v07/n856/a02.html>

Medical marijuana outlets raided

Critic decries cooperation of local law enforcement with federal agents

By Michael Manekin / MediaNews / Thursday Aug 30

“The Drug Enforcement Administration, accompanied by members of the San Mateo County Narcotics Task Force and the San Mateo Police Department, seized 50 pounds of processed marijuana, hashish, cannabis-laced edibles and approximately \$30,000 in cash”

Source: <http://www.theburlingamedailynews.com/article/2007-8-30-smc-drugs>

More restrictions considered for medical marijuana dispensaries by the City of Santa Barbara

Monday, September 10, 2007 / Reported by: [Leana Orsua](#)

SANTA BARBARA: An increase in crime may lead to stricter regulations on how medical marijuana dispensaries do business in Santa Barbara.There is enough to make us concerned, and that is that there have been some thefts, and some burglaries, and we've had some nuisance complaints, and more calls for service from the Police department. You can imagine that would be cause for concern from the neighbors.

Source: <http://www.ksby.com/Global/story.asp?S=7054409>

Medical pot dispensary raided by DEA agents

By Niesha Lofing - Bee Staff Writer / September 27, 2007

“Search warrants also were served at a storage facility near the dispensary, a home in Wilseyville and a home in Acampo, he said. DEA agents seized a total of several pounds of processed marijuana, 45 marijuana plants, an undetermined amount of cash, \$32,000 from four bank accounts, marijuana-laced food, computer information, documents and indoor marijuana-growing equipment”,

Source: <http://www.sacbee.com/101/story/401653.html>

Oakland Company raided for allegedly selling pot-laced foods

[By Leslie Griffy / Mercury News](#) 09/27/2007

“Federal drug agents busted an Oakland company that allegedly distributed pot-laced treats to medical marijuana clubs across the state, officials said today. Tainted Inc. made candy bars, energy drinks, barbecue sauce, peanut butter and brownies laced with marijuana for sale at establishments as far away as Amsterdam”,

Source: http://origin.mercurynews.com/crime/ci_7016623?nclick_check=1

Assets of Berkeley medical marijuana club frozen

Associated Press - August 1, 2007 2:34 PM ET

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) - Officials with a medical marijuana dispensary in Berkeley that has had its assets frozen say they want their money back. The freeze appears to be connected to a raid of Los Angeles-based dispensaries conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration last week. The operation Police Department, targeted about ten dispensaries in Los Angeles, including one that was a sister organization to the Berkeley Patient Group. The Berkeley group learned Monday of the action, which is preventing access to cash saved to pay state taxes.

Source: <http://www.ksq.com/Global/story.asp?S=6871916&nav=9qrx>

Out of town doctors reportedly recommending marijuana without exams

“A new report by the County Counsel on medical marijuana dispensaries says it has information doctors are selling recommendations allowing use of marijuana for medical purposes, without examining patients. "It raises suspicions about what's really going on," said Deputy County Counsel John Irby. The report says doctors travel up and down the state renting motel rooms from which medical recommendations are issued. Doctors contact local marijuana dispensaries and request patient referrals.”

Source: <http://www.eyeforyou.com/news/local/9206477.html>

Doctor Convicted on Marijuana Charges

Written by [C. Johnson](#), Internet News Producer

“An El Dorado County doctor and her husband were found guilty in a Sacramento federal courtroom Thursday of conspiracy to grow and distribute marijuana”.....”Fry told News10 at the time the charges wouldn't stop her from writing marijuana prescriptions for patients. **"I intend to generate money and I intend to protect my family and although those things are done for my business, which is the business of medical marijuana,"**

Source: http://www.news10.net/display_story.aspx?storyid=31681

The proliferation of dispensaries over the past few years, from approximately 100 a couple of years ago to four to six hundred today, has been followed by a proportional increase in the number of in-door and out-door grows. There is increasing evidence that both grow styles are connected to organized crime. While no statistical data or confirmed public intelligence exists to confirm that the growth in the number of grows is directly connected to the sharp increase in the number of dispensaries, the corollary is intuitive. Each style of growing operation has its own associated perils. Out door grows, some of which are organized and run by Mexican drug cartels, typically take place on public lands. These grows are being protected by means of booby traps and armed guards. There have been incidents of citizens and law enforcement being shot and shot at when these grows are encountered. There are also environmental concerns such as the poaching of animals, littering as well as diverting and polluting water. It is estimated that clean-up efforts cost approximately \$11,000.00 per acre used for growing operations. Indoor grows present another set of dangers. They represent increased fire hazards, electricity theft, and destruction of usable housing as well as providing a scene for potential crimes such as murder, robbery and burglary. With the huge profit potential and little threat of punishment for growing marijuana, it is no surprise that both indoor and outdoor grows are proliferating. The man arrested for one of the listed indoor grows where the potential profit is estimated to be near \$1 million dollars, (Min ¼ lb per plant , \$4,000 per lb = \$900,000.00) was sentenced to four months incarceration and three years probation. Canadian Justice Joseph Kenkel, while imposing sentence for a first time cultivator elaborated by stating, "The potential financial rewards were so great that hundreds of persons in this area with no prior criminal history were becoming involved in this activity,"

Santa Ynez Valley rancher foils marijuana growing operation

The Associated Press / Article Launched: 07/12/2007 06:18:34 AM PDT

SANTA YNEZ, Calif.—A rancher hunting for coyotes on his property confronted eight men carrying duffel bags stuffed with marijuana. The rifle-toting rancher, whose name was withheld, ordered the group of Hispanic men to stop, but they dropped the bags and ran, said Sgt. Erik Raney of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department. "The suspects were wearing camouflage clothing and carrying military style duffel bags,"

Source: http://www.mercurynews.com/breakingnews/ci_6357224

Shots warned of pot garden

By Record Searchlight staff / Saturday, September 1, 2007

YREKA — A Yreka man told Siskiyou County sheriff's deputies that he and his hunting partner heard gunshots Thursday morning while looking at a suspected marijuana plant in the Lumgreys Creek area off Highway 96 northwest of Yreka. The men were looking at a dark green plant through their binoculars when someone shot two bullets about 30 to 40 feet above their heads, deputies said. As the hunters drove away, they heard another shot.They seized 20 large marijuana plants growing in the area as well as a shotgun and rifle. The case will be submitted to the district attorney's office for evaluation of charges against Rathmanner and several other unidentified persons, deputies said.

Source: <http://www.redding.com/news/2007/sep/01/shots-warned-pot-garden/>

Mendocino forest visitors warned about marijuana gardens

By E-R Staff / Article Launched: 07/04/2007 12:00:00 AM PDT

WILLOWS -- Illegal gardens on public land is an increasing problem and presents a safety hazard to forest visitors and employees. Most illegal gardens are in very remote locations. Plants are typically sown in May and June, and harvested from late September through November. If something suspicious is seen, visitors are urged not to enter the area, but to leave and notify local law enforcement authorities immediately.

Source: http://www.chicoer.com/ci_6294376?IADID=Search-www.chicoer.com-www.chicoer.com

High times ahead? Marijuana number one illegal crop in Merced County

vpatton@mercedsun-star.com jbland@mercedsun-star.com / August 11, 2007

In 2006, Merced County law enforcement disposed of up to \$87 million worth of Cannabis sativa, about 29,000 plants. This year, law enforcement officials say they have already surpassed that number, destroying 36,420 plants with a combined street value of up to \$109 million." It was only a few years ago that meth dominated the county's drug culture.....However, pot growers are now producing more potent forms of marijuana.... Most marijuana plants are valued at \$1,000 to \$3,000 per plant, based on the measurement that an average plant will yield one pound of finished product per season, with the newer varieties' higher THC content it's not uncommon to find a single plant priced up to \$5,000Indoor hydroponic marijuana operations are spreading in the U.S. as criminal groups try to reduce their risk of detection, according to the federal report. Marijuana grown indoors is also said to be of a higher potency and is more expensive on the streets.....While Mexican cartels are said to be behind many of the illegal marijuana grows, Compston said a wide range of gangs and criminal syndicates with members from nearly every nationality and ethnic background are also involved. White criminal groups are the main indoor producers of marijuana in the U.S., while domestic marijuana cultivation by Asian growers at indoor locations is also increasing,....

Source: Mercedsun-star

Lompoc marijuana bust biggest in Santa Barbara County history

Reported by: [Wendy Thies](#) / Sep 28, 2007

CENTRAL COAST: 92,000 mature marijuana plants were discovered on the San Julian Ranch off Highway 1 and eradicated in the last couple days. The property owner was not aware that Mexican nationals were using his land to grow pot. The Sheriff's Department said the illegal crop had a street value of \$288 million.

Source: <http://www.ksby.com/Global/story.asp?S=7144785>

Authorities begin sweep of Shasta County marijuana plots

The Associated Press / 07/09/2007

REDDING: Searchers expect to uproot more than double the 237,311 marijuana plants they found last year, said Shasta County Sheriff Tom Bosenko. Authorities blamed Mexico-based drug cartels for the sharp increase in the size and number of outdoor gardens since 2001, when 73,000 plants were found in the Northern California County.....In the past, authorities destroyed the marijuana plants, but didn't have enough money to remove the propane tanks, irrigation pipes, gardening tools and camping gear used by the growers.....This time, the county has received money to remove the growing equipment and restore the damaged forest. Bosenko said it costs about \$11,000 to restore one acre of land.'

Source: http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_6333477

\$600K In Marijuana Plants Seized In Aliso Viejo

(CBS) ALISO VIEJO, Calif. About 6,000 marijuana plants, with a street value of about \$600,000, were removed today from a canyon adjacent to an upscale Alison Viejo neighborhood. The plants, cut down from the north and south sides of Wood Canyon, were watered by a system of hoses that tapped into lines of a homeowner association that feeds a tract of homes in the area of Peppertree and Sprucewood....

Source: http://cbs2.com/local/local_story_193220618.html

Large-Scale Marijuana Garden Found In South Valley

The Tulare County Sheriff's Department is investigating a large-scale marijuana garden found in the Blue Ridge Mountains. "They say that the campsites were littered with trash, insecticides, and fertilizers along with a shotgun and assault rifle. Deputies say that a total of 30,890 marijuana plants, with a street value of \$123.5 million were eradicated."

Source: <http://www.kmph.com/news/local/8602062.html>

Officers seize more than 19,000 marijuana plants

July 23, 2007

PLANADA – "After counting up their haul, law enforcement officers seized more than 19,000 mature marijuana plants in eastern Merced County.....The marijuana had a street value of \$76 million. Concealed in a 100-acre cornfield near Planada, the marijuana had been planted in April. It was the largest seizure of the year. "

Source: <http://www.mercedsunstar.com/local/story/13817181p-14393550c.html>

3,000 Marijuana Plants Eradicated In Calaveras County

Wednesday, August 01, 2007 / Bill Johnson

San Andreas: 3,000 marijuana plants were eradicated by a combination of narcotics deputies, the Calaveras County and Tuolumne County S.W.A.T. teams and C.A.M.P. (Campaign Against Marijuana Planting) team members Tuesday.” “So far this year Calaveras County has eradicated more than 26,000 plants. According to C.A.M.P. personnel, a pound of buds can be harvested from a mature plant. If there is an excellent T.C.P. level, the street value would be approximately \$4,000.”

Source: <http://www.mymotherlode.com/News/article/kvml/1185988304>

Two Men Arrested For Reedley Marijuana Bust

“Deputies found 5,604 marijuana plants in the area of Goodfellow and Buttonwillow. Officials say that the marijuana had an estimated street value of \$22,416,000.00. Mims says that both men were arrested on cultivation charges, after they were found by deputies entering the marijuana grow with the purpose to water it.”

Source: <http://www.kmph.com/news/local/8882512.html>

4,500 Marijuana Plants Eradicated Off Italian Bar Rd.

Thursday, July 26, 2007 BJ Hansen MML News Reporter

Sonora, Ca -- 4,515 marijuana plants were eradicated yesterday in the Rose Creek area off of Italian Bar Rd. The Tuolumne County Sheriff's Department reports that the plants averaged approximately 12 inches in height, and had not yet started to bud. If allowed to mature, the plants would have had a street value of approximately \$1.8 million. No suspects were located. The Department believes that it is the work of a drug trafficking organization.

Source: <http://www.mymotherlode.com/News/article/kvml/1185476165>

Over 10,000 Marijuana Plants Found Near Moccasin

Thursday, August 02, 2007 / BJ Hansen MML News Reporter

Moccasin, Ca – “The Tuolumne Narcotics Team continues to stay busy, as yesterday a marijuana garden was eradicated four miles south of Moccasin. Seven different plots were located, and 10,373 plants eradicated.” “Based on evidence at the scene, the Sheriff's Department believes it is the work of a drug trafficking organization. The marijuana was flown out by helicopter and destroyed. Had the plants been harvested, the street value would be approximately \$20 million. So far this year, 47,508 plants have been eradicated in Tuolumne County.

Source: <http://www.mymotherlode.com/News/article/kvml/1186084979>

Marijuana plants valued at \$1.1 million seized in Sonoma

The Associated Press / 08/03/2007

SANTA ROSA, Calif.—“Sonoma County authorities seized 63,000 marijuana plants valued at \$1.1 million during a weeklong eradication operation, officials said Friday.”

“At one site, they seized 20 pounds of harvested marijuana that was being dried.

“It was good to get a lot of plants out of there early in the season,” Bertoli said.

The task force has seized 100,000 plants so far this year.”

Source: http://www.mercurynews.com/breakingnews/ci_6536640

Marijuana raid on Hidden Villa land nets \$128 million in illegal plants

by [Becky Trout](#) / Palo Alto Online Staff

State and local law enforcement officers raided Thursday an illegal marijuana garden estimated at 32,000 plants -- worth \$128 million -- on Hidden Villa land, although the non-profit camp and nature center in Los Altos Hills was not aware of them, said Santa Clara County Sgt. Ed Wise.

Source: http://www.almanacnews.com/news/show_story.php?id=949

Pot bust at Yuba: 3rd cartel-linked raid this year; about \$1,000 per plant, officer says

By Robyn Moormeister, / 12:01 a.m. PT Aug 7, 2007

"Local, state and federal law enforcement agents raided three large marijuana plantations Monday on federal and state land near the South Fork Yuba River - encampments most likely operated by a Mexican drug cartel, officials said." "The entire canyon is littered with gardens," Evans said. The first two plantations together yielded 9,201 plants, he said, watered by an elaborate irrigation system. When the pilot spotted the third garden, officers were called back in and flown to the spot, where they used chain saws to cut away brush for a landing zone. There, officers found another 2,428 bushes, Evans said. "That's 11,629 plants today,"

Source: <http://www.theunion.com/article/20070807/NEWS/108070107>

Terrorists teaming with drug cartels

By Sara A. Carter

August 8, 2007

"Islamic extremists embedded in the United States — posing as Hispanic nationals — are partnering with violent Mexican drug gangs to finance terror networks in the Middle East, according to a Drug Enforcement Administration report. "Since drug traffickers and terrorists operate in a clandestine environment, both groups utilize similar methodologies to function all lend themselves to facilitation and are among the essential elements that may contribute to the successful conclusion of a catastrophic event by terrorists," said the confidential report, a copy of which was obtained by The Washington Times. The 2005 report outlines an ongoing scheme in which multiple Middle Eastern drug-trafficking and terrorist cells operating in the U.S. fund terror networks overseas, aided by established Mexican cartels with highly sophisticated trafficking routes."

Source:

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070808/NATION/108080088/1002>

Marijuana Plants Found In Angeles National Forest

(CBS) ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST, "Calif. Investigators involved in a "marijuana abatement" operation found up to 10,000 pot plants growing in the Angeles National Forest and were removing them Friday, officials said." "It was unclear who was growing the plants in the remote area, but large operations such as this one could be operated by illegal immigrants on behalf of Mexican drug cartels, Nunez said."

Source: http://cbs2.com/topstories/local_story_222151030.html

Massive marijuana garden discovered in Humboldt County

Friday, August 10, 2007

DINSMORE, Calif. (AP) – “In the biggest pot bust in Humboldt County history, authorities seized more than 134,000 marijuana plants worth an estimated \$469 million, law enforcement officials said”.....”No arrests were made during the raid, but investigators believe a Mexican drug cartel was behind the massive growing operation.”

Source: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/n/a/2007/08/10/state/n160119D36.DTL&type=printable>

Marijuana Gardens Raided in Yosemite National Park

On Monday, August 13, 2007, Yosemite National Park Rangers located and seized 7,428 mature marijuana plants from three gardens in the park related to the same growing operation. The value of the marijuana plants is estimated at about \$22 million.....The illegal cultivation sites bore the characteristics of a Mexican drug trafficking enterprise, including a sophisticated watering system, use of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. The growing operation resulted in considerable natural resource destruction....."For years we've been seeing these people make millions of dollars in profit, while they devastate the environment on private property and California's majestic public lands. They destroy habitat, pollute streams with poisons and nitrogen fertilizers, kill wildlife, and pose a fire threat. The only thing missing is public outrage," concluded Shackelton

Source: http://yubanet.com/artman/publish/article_63419.shtml

Glendale police seize pot plants worth millions

By Andrew Blankstein and Tiffany Hsu, Los Angeles Times Staff Writers

August 17, 2007

Glendale police confiscated \$10 million worth of marijuana from a sophisticated outdoor growing operation in the Verdugo Mountains that tapped into a city water tank designated for emergency use during brush fires.....The growers watered their crops by illegally hooking a drip-irrigation system into a 10,000-gallon cistern in the mountains, which are prone to summer and fall brush fires. Glendale fire officials said half of the water tank had been drained.The use of water that was reserved for firefighters outraged both Glendale officials and residents, who said they were thankful that the chopper pilot found the farm before the tank had been emptied.

Source: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-pot17aug17,0,803583.story?coll=la-home-local>

Narcotics Investigators Seize 2781 Marijuana Plants near Mountain Ranch

Posted by: Kim Hamilton on 08/24/2007

Mountain Ranch, CA...Narcotics Investigators from the Calaveras County Sheriffs Office seized 2781 marijuana plants in an early morning raid near Mountain Ranch.This latest seizure brings the total number of marijuana plants for the record setting season to 30,857

Source:

http://thepinetree.net/index.php?module=announce&ANN_user_op=view&ANN_id=3523

Illegal marijuana plants confiscated in Concow

Staff Report / 08/25/2007 12:00:00 AM PDT

Butte County Sheriff's Marijuana Suppression Unit (MSU) raided two separate illegal marijuana grows. MSU raided a marijuana garden in the Concow area and located 1,210 marijuana plants.....The estimated value of this garden at full maturity would be \$4,840,000.00. On Thursday, the MSU raided another marijuana garden in the Concow area.....Investigators located and eradicated 2,389 marijuana plants in three plots that were also being watered by nearby creeks,The estimated value of the plants at full maturity would be \$9,556,000.00.

Source: http://www OrovilleMr.com/news/ci_6715856

Marijuana drive in California forests

August 31, 2007 - 9:54AM

The Bush administration has launched a campaign to eradicate thousands of acres of illegal marijuana plants from California's national forests, the US Forest Service says. Officials complain that crime rings have planted around 2,400 hectares of secret marijuana plantations in federal forests and often send armed squatters to set up camp and tend the lucrative crop. In one recent three-week period, officials pulled up more than 280,000 marijuana plants, worth about \$US1.8 billion (\$A2.2 billion), largely in California's Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Sixteen people were arrested and 10 weapons were seized in those operations.

Source: <http://www.theage.com.au/news/World/Marijuana-drive-in-California-forests/2007/08/31/1188067316958.html>

Pot Plants Worth \$56 Million Found In Cupertino

Members of the Special Operations Division Marijuana Enforcement Team found 14,000 marijuana plants growing on a parcel of land adjacent to mid-peninsula property....the plants are worth \$56 million. Officers told Trujillo each plant is worth \$4,000.....The environment also pays a price for these gardens as growers use pesticides, poison and fertilizer. Many of the gardens are on public land and growers use natural creeks and pools to irrigate the gardens, according to California Department of Fish and Game patrol Lt. John Nores. Nores said illegal poaching of deer and other animals and the poisoning of fish and other wildlife are common at these sites.

Source: <http://www.nbc11.com/news/14004688/detail.html>

12,500 marijuana plants uprooted in Los Padres forest garden

The Associated Press / Article Launched: 09/05/2007

SANTA BARBARA, Calif.—Firefighters battling the two-month Zaca wildfire stumbled onto an illegal 12,500-plant marijuana garden in a remote area of the Los Padres National Forest. Sheriff's Sgt. Erik Raney said the marijuana, which was uprooted in a raid Tuesday, was "one of several discovered by pilots flying fire missions for the Zaca Fire." It's been a record year for marijuana eradication in Santa Barbara County with nearly 96,000 pot plants uprooted, Raney said.

Source: http://www.mercurynews.com/breakingnews/ci_6806161

Lake County leads California in pot growing

By Elizabeth Wilson -- Staff Reporter / Record Bee

LAKE COUNTY -- Narcotic officers stormed a 15-acre marijuana garden in Lakeport as part of a three-day sweep in the county that resulted in the eradication of more than 35,000 plants. Lake County is the number one pot-growing county in the state for the second year running, authorities say. More than 320,260 plants have been seized so far this growing season in Lake County, which begins in mid-April and ends in September or early October. "These plants sell for \$4,000 per pound," said Ryan Pontecorvo,....The sheriff's department can't do this all on their own. They find the sites and mark them with GPS and then call us in. We bring in the money it takes it costs \$11,000 per acre to clean out," said Pontecorvo.

Source: http://www.record-bee.com/local/ci_6804383

U.S. Forest Service to Focus on Illegal Marijuana Grows

Bill Johnson / MML News Director September 06, 2007

Vallejo, CA -- According to Special Agent in charge of the Pacific Southwest Region of the U.S. Forest Service (Region #5) Ron Pugh, by next spring the number of law enforcement officers will be more than doubled the current number. Pugh says 75 officers are currently involved in dealing with the increasing number of marijuana grows throughout the state. Next spring a minimum of 160 officers will be involved. Pugh adds that eliminating the grows and prosecuting the three Mexican families, who law enforcement agencies believe are responsible for the California marijuana gardens, has become the top priority of the U.S. Forest Service.

Source: <http://www.mymotherlode.com/News/article/kvml/1189116941>

Authorities seize more than 7,000 pot plants

By: Penne Usher, Journal Staff Writer / September 5, 2007

More than \$25 million worth of marijuana will not hit the streets after area law enforcement officials seized more than 7,000 plants in five separate raids. Officials said the illegal growing of marijuana continues to be a serious public safety issues on public lands. "Growers are often armed with weapons to protect their crops and have used violence in the past against citizens and law enforcement," Ausnow said. "In theses recent raids, several loaded firearms were also seized."

Source:

http://www.auburnjournal.com/articles/2007/09/06/news/top_stories/01potplants6.txt

Authorities Clear Thousands of Marijuana Plants in Local Field

Santa Barbara's Sheriff's officials conducted a day-long marijuana sweep operation on Monday. A total of 6,345 plants were seized yesterday, bringing the total number of plants seized in Santa Barbara County this season to 102,218. The value of the plants seized this year in Santa Barbara County alone is estimated at over \$327,000,000..... Marijuana plantations are very often the work of dangerous drug cartels, and visitors who happen to spot them may be assaulted, according to the Sheriff's Department. Anyone with information leading to the illegal growth of marijuana should call Santa Barbara's Sheriff Department.

Source: <http://www.keyt.com/home/ticker/9714557.html>

Monterey County marijuana gardens uprooted, crop worth \$75 mil

The Associated Press / 09/14/2007

CARMEL, Calif.—More than 15,000 marijuana plants were uprooted in two Carmel Valley pot gardens after they were discovered by a California Highway Patrol pilot. Monterey County sheriff's deputies raided the two massive marijuana plots Thursday after the CHP reported the pot patches near Robinson Canyon Road. Deputies said they found at least 15,000 marijuana plants, some as tall as 12 feet. The marijuana could have fetched \$75 million on the street, deputies said.

Source: http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_6892627

Authorities uncover marijuana garden in Point Reyes National Seashore

Associated Press - September 19, 2007 8:34 AM ET

SANTA ROSA, Calif. (AP) - National Park Service rangers and Marin County sheriff's deputies seized about 3,500 plants Monday on Bolinas Ridge in the seashore. The street value of the seized marijuana plants is estimated at \$9 million. Authorities say last year more than 22,000 marijuana plants with a street value of more than \$48 million were removed from park lands in west Marin County. Because of damage caused by the marijuana growing operations officials at Point Reyes National Seashore spent more than \$100,000 last year to clean up and restore the land to its natural state.

Source: <http://www.kesq.com/Global/story.asp?S=7097158&nav=9qrx>

Marijuana Eradicated Near Jamestown

BJ Hansen / MML News Reporter / Saturday, September 22, 2007

Jamestown, Ca -- 768 marijuana plants were eradicated Friday in the Woods Creek area near Jacksonville Rd. The Tuolumne County Sheriff's Department says the patch was discovered by deer hunters last weekend. The hunters alerted the property owner, who in turn immediately contacted the Sheriff's Department. The owner was unaware of the marijuana growing on his property. The 786 plants ranged from two to six feet tall. They were heavily budded and ready for harvest. The Sheriff's Department says it appears to be a "local" operation. If harvested, the street value would have been approximately \$3.5 million.

Source: <http://www.mymotherlode.com/News/article/kvml/1190471025>

Marijuana growing expands, police say

[By Chris Metinko / STAFF WRITER](#) 09/25/2007

"We're seeing a proliferation of marijuana farming in the unincorporated areas," said Alameda County sheriff's Capt. Dale Amaral. "And this isn't just a health and safety issue, but also an environmental issue." Amaral said that in 2006 the sheriff's office destroyed more than 12,000 marijuana plants being farmed on unincorporated land....Amaral said many people don't consider the environmental impacts of such illicit agriculture. "These people use pesticides and fertilizer, and they dam up waterways," Amaral said. "They're causing irreparable harm to the environment." Amaral said a lot of cleanup is required at each site, because the cultivators usually camp out with their crop until it matures in about three to four months.

Source: http://www.contracostatimes.com/news/ci_6992825?nlick_check=1

Marijuana eradication operation nets \$15 million worth of pot

By [PETER DAY](#) / Star Editor / July 9, 2007 - 1:12PM

“A recent two-week-long marijuana cultivation crackdown operation by county law enforcement resulted in the seizure of a total of 4,416 plants with a street value of more than \$15 million, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Narcotic Division/Marijuana Eradication Team. Two of the six indoor cultivations eradicated in the joint San Bernardino/Los Angeles county effort were located in golf course-area homes in Hesperia.”

Source:

http://www.hesperia.com/news/county_921___article.html/marijuana_million.html

Marijuana bust in Big Bear City

The search resulted in the discovery of a highly sophisticated and elaborate marijuana grow that included approximately 350 marijuana plants, as well as grow equipment, including lights, filters, fans, dehumidifiers, and Carbon Dioxide. In addition to the marijuana cultivation, a large amount of cash, marijuana packaged individually for sale, concentrated cannabis, paraphernalia, and packaging was found.

Source: <http://www.bearvalleynews.com/bvn%208083107.htm>

Marijuana plants and packaged pot discovered

By [Peter Hegarty](#) / [STAFF WRITER](#) 09/04/2007

More than 200 marijuana plants and about three pounds of packaged marijuana -- ready to smoke -- was seized Thursday when Alameda police uncovered a pot-growing operation on Garfield Avenue. Inside the detached garage, which was behind a single-family residence, police also allegedly found a heating and watering system for the plants.Along with marijuana, police found about \$9,000 in cash at the residence in the 3200 block of Garfield Avenue, plus a .22 caliber handgun.

Source: http://www.mercurynews.com/alamedacounty/ci_6796944?nclick_check=1

Elk Grove real estate agent linked to nearly half of 21 pot homes

The Associated Press / 09/21/2007

ELK GROVE, Calif.—“An Elk Grove real estate agent has ties to nearly half of 21 raided pot houses, according to a database of properties sold in the area”..... “a 10-month investigation. Police seized 6,855 marijuana plants, 36 pounds of processed marijuana, more than \$200,000 in cash and 10 vehicles

Source: http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_6961911?nclick_check=1

Man Gets 4 Months in Jail for Growing Pot At Home

(CBS) POMONA, Calif. A man, 27, was sentenced Monday to four months in jail and three years probation for growing marijuana in a Diamond Bar home. Ken Ho was arrested April 16 when officials discovered nearly 900 marijuana plants inside the home. He later pleaded no contest to a charge of cultivating marijuana. Ho had originally been charged with felony counts of cultivating marijuana, theft of utility services and maliciously taking down a utility line. A second person Chuan Zhou, 42, was arrested along with Ho, but charges against him were dismissed.

Source: http://cbs2.com/topstories/local_story_232175456.html

One of our major concerns with this issue has been the potential effect on our youth. The trend of high school age children becoming involved the use of marijuana continues.

Know the facts about teen marijuana use

By Provided by Federal DEA officer / Jul 26, 2007, 15:28

Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug in the United States. Among marijuana's most harmful consequences is its role in leading to the use of other illegal drugs like cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine.

Long-term studies of students who use drugs show that very few young people use other illegal drugs without first trying marijuana. The risk of using cocaine has been estimated to be more than 100 times greater for those who have tried marijuana than for those who have never tried it. The primary mind-altering chemical in marijuana is called THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol). Due to advancements in the cultivation process, the THC content in today's marijuana is much higher than in marijuana that was available 20 or 30 years ago. Due to the increased potency, it takes less marijuana to achieve a greater and longer lasting "high."

Source: http://www.thedanielislandnews.com/artman/publish/printer_2430.php

Tests show alcohol, pot used by Perris High teens killed in crash

The Associated Press / 07/26/2007 SAN DIEGO—Four Perris High School seniors killed on Interstate 15 while heading for a Mission Beach outing were under the influence of marijuana or alcohol at the time of the crash, the coroner said. Three boys were killed on impact, and a fourth died the following day at a hospital. The California Highway Patrol said the car was traveling at 90 mph or faster and possibly racing another car before the crash. ... CHP Officer Eric Newburg said investigators concluded speed and driving under the influence of marijuana were the primary factors in the crash

Source: http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_6471920?nclick_check=1

Teacher in Court for Allegedly Giving Marijuana to Students

A teacher accused of smoking marijuana with her students appeared in court. Goleta Junior High School Teacher Melissa Dunning was arraigned on three different felony counts including smoking marijuana with two fourteen year old boys and contributing to the delinquency of minors. Dunning worked at the Middle School as a temporary teacher for about since March of this year. Authorities say one of the victim's parents suspected her son had be smoking pot when she picked him up after a tutoring session.

Source: <http://www.keyt.com/news/local/8311502.html>

Two planning commissioners question mayor's motion to ban medical marijuana dispensaries, and a school board member's plea is finally heard.

By ANNIE BURRIS / The Orange County Register / Friday, July 27, 2007

Huntington Beach is the latest city to consider making medical marijuana dispensers illegal. Currently, there are no dispensaries in the city. **Recently, however, the city has received requests for a dispensary from three Marina High School students.**

Source: <http://www.ocregister.com/news/medical-marijuana-huntington-1788948-beach>

Medical pot cardholder tries to sell to teenager

September 01, 2007

Two California residents, one of whom carried a medical marijuana card, face felony charges after they attempted to sell the drug to a teenager Thursday in Medford, police say.....He said police seized five ounces of marijuana from the vehicle's occupants. The 17-year-old was released pending prosecutors' review of the case.

Source:

<http://www.mailtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070901/NEWS/709010317>

Medical studies and opinions continue to warn us regarding increased marijuana usage and dependency issues as well as the resultant medical problems associated with the use of high potency marijuana.

Dr. Colin McMillan • Marijuana is a health problem

Published: Tuesday, July 17, 2007

The Canadian Medical Association, which represents 65,000 physicians, is very concerned about the recent reports of increased use of marijuana in Canada. The physician community is equally concerned that the government will seek to combat illegal drug use and addiction through the criminal justice system by laying more charges for simple possession which could make the problem even worse. All Canadians should be aware that marijuana is an addictive substance, harmful to health. The health risks of marijuana use range from short-term effects such as anxiety, restlessness, and impaired thinking to long-term effects such as bronchitis, emphysema and cancer. Marijuana use has also been linked to lung damage comparable to that produced by tobacco use, but the effects are more severe and sudden. The message is simple: Canadians should not use marijuana and those who are addicted should immediately seek medical assistance. Because of these potential harms, it's critical that changes to the criminal law affecting marijuana neither encourage nor promote its use. **When the Canadian Medical Association appeared before Parliament on this very same issue back in 2002, we expressed concern that even the debate over decriminalization and medical marijuana might legitimize its use for recreational purposes..** Colin McMillan is president of the Canadian Medical Association.

Source: <http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/opinion/story.html?id=ae6959f8-8336-4732-a435-62a0ad8f8866>

Study: Marijuana may increase psychosis risk

LONDON (AP) — Using marijuana seems to increase the chance of becoming psychotic, researchers report in an analysis of past research that reignites the issue of whether pot is dangerous. The new review suggests that even infrequent use could raise the small but real risk of this serious mental illness by 40%. Doctors have long suspected a connection and say the latest findings underline the need to highlight marijuana's long-term risks. The research, paid for by the British Health Department, is being published Friday in medical journal The Lancet. "The available evidence now suggests that cannabis is not as harmless as many people think," said Dr. Stanley Zammit, one of the study's authors and a lecturer in the department of psychological medicine at Cardiff University.

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2007-07-26-marijuana-study_N.htm

Marijuana may cause rare skin cancer

Posted Aug 2nd 2007 9:00AM by [Jacki Donaldson](#)

Researchers at Harvard Medical School say the active component of marijuana may enhance the virus that causes a rare type of skin cancer called Kaposi's sarcoma. While most people are not at risk of developing this cancer, AIDS patients and transplant recipients are. It's the weakened immune system that puts some at risk for this disease. And these are the people who should discuss with their doctors the costs of using marijuana medicinally or recreationally.

It may take only small doses of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) -- the ingredient that gives marijuana users a "high" -- to cause cells to become infected and then multiply, according to a study reported in the August 1 issue of *Cancer Research*. Previous studies have indicated this very same association between marijuana use and Kaposi's sarcoma. But this study shows THC itself is the driving force.

Source: <http://www.thecancerblog.com/2007/08/02/marijuana-may-cause-rare-skin-cancer/>

Experts: Marijuana More Addictive Than Ever

Experts say marijuana is now more addictive than ever before. Substance abuse counselors say marijuana growers and sellers are making the drug stronger so people will keep coming back for more. Pam Morrison sees firsthand what the increase in THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, does to users. Morrison, the Coastal Horizons program director said, "We have youth as well as adults that are seeking substance abuse treatment because their lives are completely unmanageable as a result to an addiction to marijuana alone." Morrison said marijuana users spend a lot of time trying to find the drug and even more time dealing with its effects. She said some of the effects are "hangovers, not being able to go to work or school in the morning, dropping out of school, quitting their job, getting in trouble with the law, getting involved with gangs."....Morrison said, "Marijuana is a very addictive drug, and people's lives have been destroyed because of marijuana."

Source: <http://www.wsocv.com/health/13606927/detail.html>

Marijuana: Medical Implications

[American Family Physician](#),

Long-term use of marijuana may lead to subtle cognitive deficits. In studies using animals, chronic exposure to marijuana changed the structure and function of the hippocampus in ways similar to the effects of the aging process.²⁷ Acute exposure to marijuana leads to deficits in short-term memory, but long-term effects on cognition are not as well documented. An "amotivational syndrome" caused by marijuana use is still controversial but of concern. High school students who use marijuana often spend less time on homework, have lower grades and more delinquency.²⁸ Also, college women who use marijuana report significantly higher rates of motor vehicle crashes, smoking, use of alcohol and tranquilizers, use of sex as a coping mechanism, violent dreams, sleeplessness and psychiatric problems than do nonusers. Identifying patients with a marijuana-related disorder can be difficult, because abuse and associated problems commonly develop slowly.

Often, patients do not recognize that they have a problem or do not want to give up their drug use. In addition, they may try to hide their problem from parents, physicians and other authority figures. Unexplained deterioration in school or work performance may be a red flag for drug abuse. In addition, problems with or changes in social relationships (such as spending more time alone or with persons suspected of using drugs) and recreational activities (such as giving up activities that were once pleasurable) may indicate drug abuse. Information from concerned parents or spouses is often helpful in sorting out a differential diagnosis. Although marijuana abuse in adolescents and young adults is of particular concern, it should not be overlooked in other patient groups. For example, persons with certain psychiatric disorders (such as bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder), those who are under severe emotional distress and those who have chronic pain might be at increased risk. Ultimately, patients who need treatment will be identified through direct disclosure of marijuana-related problems by the patient, a positive urine drug screen, or identification by legal, school or employment authorities.

Source: <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/publications/journals/afp.html>

As we have seen in the past, trends occurring in Canada, Washington and Oregon mirror those occurring in California. However, we can also see these trends across the country as well as in other nations.

Marijuana, cash stolen in Mount Vernon "execution-style" slaying

By [WILL DAVID](#) / THE JOURNAL NEWS / (Original publication: July 3, 2007)

MOUNT VERNON - A group of masked armed gunmen who shot and killed a 52-year-old Mount Vernon man execution-style last Friday stole about a half a pound of marijuana and several hundred dollars from his apartment, police said yesterday. Mount Vernon police Commissioner David Chong said Neville Brett, of 138 W. Fourth St., was laying facedown on the floor, posing no threat to the four or five assailants, when one used a Tec-9 gun to shoot him in the back once as they were leaving with the money and marijuana. "

Source:

<http://www.lohud.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070703/NEWS02/707030328/-1/rss01>

3 arrested in Wash. marijuana grow at house where 2 were slain

EVERETT, Wash. — Three people have been arrested for investigation in marijuana growing operations at two houses, including one where two people were shot to death, federal court documents show. . . . The houses, residents and owners came to the attention of federal drug agents about three weeks before July 2, when police found the body of Kevin Meas, 23, and 789 marijuana plants in the basement of the first house, according to court documents. . . . At both houses, electricity meters had been bypassed to hide excessive power use, a typical indication of large-scale marijuana production. . .

Source: <http://www.policeone.com/drug-interdiction-narcotics/articles/1290035/>

Shooting Leads Deputies to Marijuana Grow House

By [Dana Willhoit](#) / The Ledger / September 29, 2007

LAKELAND -- Sheriff's deputies responding to reports of a weapon blast this morning discovered an elaborate marijuana-growing operation in a suburban home in north Lakeland.....had 300 marijuana plants with an estimated street value of \$600,000 to \$1 million.....The investigation began at 9 a.m. when neighbors called to report they heard a gun. Deputies said a woman in the house had been shot in the neck by people attempting to steal the marijuana plants....."This is just another example of criminals attempting to disguise their crimes in neighborhoods.

Source: <http://www.theledger.com/article/20070929/BREAKING/70929027>

“A Very, Very Serious Problem for the State”

By Ruth Howard for The Clatskanie Chief

CLATSKANIE, Oregon (STPNS) -- Should Oregon employers be required to accommodate [medical marijuana](#) cardholders?.....“I actually support the use of medical marijuana,” Harmon told those in attendance, saying he voted for the passage of the Oregon Medical Marijuana Act (OMMA) in the November 1998 general election.Harmon later told attendees that the people of Oregon “were led down the path to vote for medical marijuana” as they viewed television commercials of “very seriously ill people.” He believes the “wrong message” was sent by the passage of the act and proponents who seek the legalization of the drug. He also indicated he is disturbed by the fact that businesses are being told they must accommodate medical marijuana in the workplace.

Source: http://www.stpns.net/view_article.html?articleId=53649769724275994

Kevin Mannix wants to repeal the Oregon Medical Marijuana Act

...Mannix claims that these changes are necessary because of "abuse of the system currently in place" and has couched this language as just one section of an initiative that also provides tough language to fight meth, sex crimes, domestic violence, drunk drivers, and to tighten control over convicted criminals. We must work now to get this information to the people of Oregon so they are not fooled into repealing OMMA in the name of fighting crime. Tell everyone to Just Say No to the Mannix "Oregon Crime fighting Act" initiative.

<http://www.ornorml.org/main.php>

Police: Indoor marijuana nurseries appearing in northeast Ohio

Associated Press - July 23, 2007 8:45 AM ET

CLEVELAND (AP) - Police say gangs are setting up large indoor marijuana-growing operations in northeast Ohio. So far this summer, police have found three basement nurseries in Geauga, Portage and Lake Counties. And last year, police discovered a network of houses in Medina and Lorain counties. Most of the homes contained hundreds of marijuana plants. Police say the operations are typically placed in large, expensive suburban homes and are run by Vietnamese gangs who have been moving across the border from Canada to take advantage of the US market.

Source: Information from: The Plain Dealer, <http://www.cleveland.com>

Marijuana grown in suburban basements, linked to Vietnamese gangs

Noting the similarity in the arrests and structure of the grow-ops, investigators conclude that Asian organized-crime groups - particularly Vietnamese and Chinese gangs - were heavily into international marijuana trade, possibly working with other organized crime groups such as biker gangs or the Mafia. "It's quite clear we're talking about organized crime groups," Nadeau said.While outdoor marijuana growing by Mexican drug gangs has always been a concern, U.S. drug agents saw a spike in the number of indoor sites busted and plants confiscated from 2001 to 2006, according to a report released this year by the National Drug Intelligence Center. The report also notes growing activity among Asian gangs in Ontario, Quebec and New England.....

Source: <http://www.knowgangs.com/news/july07/0723.php>

HPD targets 'organized crime-style' pot ring

By KEVIN MORAN

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Houston police are sweeping the city today with arrest warrants for participants in what a prosecutor calls an "organized crime-style" marijuana cultivation ring that distributes pot all over the country.....Doyle and Houston police raided seven homes and seized hundreds of high-grade marijuana plants in southeast Houston Monday. The raids were the culmination of a five-month investigation into a ring that has been selling marijuana grown in the houses for about \$4,000 a pound, he said. "This is a very sophisticated criminal organization," Doyle said. "We have information that this stuff is shipped all over the country because they grow so much of it."

Source: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/front/4974551.html>

Health Department Appoints Medical Marijuana Advisory Committee

(Santa Fe) – The New Mexico Department of Health has appointed eight board-certified doctors to the new Medical Advisory Committee that will advise the Department on rules governing the Medical Cannabis Program.....The committee will meet at least twice a year to hold public hearings and evaluate patients' petitions to add conditions to the list of qualifying medical conditions.....Qualifying conditions are: cancer, glaucoma, multiple sclerosis, damage to the nervous tissue of the spinal cord with intractable spasticity, epilepsy and HIV/AIDS. Hospice patients may also be eligible.

Source: www.nmhealth.org.

Governor demands plan for medical marijuana

SANTA FE (AP) - Governor Richardson is ordering the state Health Department to move ahead with planning of a medical marijuana program. That's despite the agency's worries about possible federal prosecution. The department announced earlier this week it would not implement provisions of the law that call for the agency to oversee the production and distribution of marijuana to eligible patients. Richardson Friday directed the agency to continue planning to fully implement the program.....

Source: <http://kob.com/article/stories/S170319.shtml?cat=500>

Below are commentaries discussing the apparent “hijacking” of medical marijuana by drug dealers;

Written Statement of Joseph T. Rannazzisi
Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control
Drug Enforcement Administration
United States Department of Justice
July 12, 2007

Federal Law in Light of Claims that Marijuana is “Medicine” Marijuana is a Schedule I substance under Title 21 of the United States Code. As defined by law, a Schedule I substance is one that has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States, no accepted safety for use under medical supervision and a high potential for abuse..... Under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FDCA), it is unlawful to market a new drug in the United States unless FDA approves the drug as being both safe and effective for the treatment of disease or condition. To date, FDA has not found marijuana to be safe and effective for the treatment of any disease or condition.DEA's efforts to enforce Federal law surrounding the possession and trafficking of marijuana have been hampered by the passage of laws in several states which inhibit State and local law enforcement from acting against individuals and organizations selling marijuana under the pretence that it has medicinal value. Law enforcement has seen a growing list of ailments used by dealers, patients and physicians to justify smoking marijuana. It has become so exhaustive that anyone could claim “a medical need”. That list includes ADD, headaches, arthritis, PMS, IBS, hepatitis, renal failure, hypertension, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, insomnia, paranoia, bipolar affective disorder, alcoholism, cocaine and amphetamine addiction, epilepsy, bronchitis, emphysema, osteoporosis, degenerative disc disease, polio, ulcers, stuttering, seizures, color blindness and various types of pain....Anecdotal information and data have suggested in Los Angeles the significant likelihood that the marijuana as medicine dispensaries affects crime in adjacent communities The DEA’s role is one of enforcement. It is, after all, our middle name. We will continue to enforce the law as it stands and to investigate, indict, and arrest those who use the color of state law to possess and sell marijuana.

Source: <http://www.dea.gov/pubs/cngrtest/ct071207.html>

Hands Up, And Back Away From The Brownies"

Raids and arrests are up, but so are the number of dispensaries—and more states are coming aboard. Activists say regulation could help.....Alas, medicinal marijuana is producing nothing but pain for California politicians and law enforcement officials. The Golden State has seen an explosion of dispensaries.....An estimated 600 dispensaries have sprouted up statewide in the past three years, a \$1 billion-a-year business by one estimate.....In July federal agents raided a dozen dispensaries across the state.....Don Duncan, whose California Patients Group is a nonprofit, says the feds are tarring all dispensaries with the same brush. Ironically, he was arguing for more regulation of the industry at Los Angeles' City Council when his dispensary was raided on July 25...

...The city council ended up initiating a moratorium on new dispensaries. Councilman Dennis Zine says complaints about the dispensaries' staying open too late and distributing promotional fliers near schools has the city considering a number of regulations, including making sure they are collecting sales taxes and prohibiting consumption on the grounds, "just like liquor stores."....

Source: http://images.businessweek.com/ss/07/08/0803_marijuana/index_01.htm

Marijuana gains new foe

Group seeks to keep out medical dispensaries

By Will Bigham, Staff Writer

Article Launched: 08/20/2007 11:44:20 PM PDT

RANCHO CUCAMONGA - A newly formed organization opposed to medical-marijuana dispensaries is urging local governments to prohibit the businesses. The Inland Valley Drug Free Community Coalition fears dispensaries will attract crime and increase illicit marijuana use by people who do not need the drug for medical reasons. "It will bring criminal activity, blight," said Brenda Chabot, the Rancho Cucamonga-based group's executive director. "Political leaders should have enough courage to say they don't want these in their communities." Group members include law-enforcement officials, substance-abuse workers, youth representatives and others. They are now planning community events to educate the public about the negative impact they believe dispensaries would have on Inland Valley communities.....

Source: http://www.dailybulletin.com/news/ci_6675913

Anonymous Post on Americans for Safe Access web site

To: ASA LIST losangeles@lists.safeaccessnow.org Sent: Monday, July 16, 2007

Subject: [Los Angeles] recreational users at dispensaries

I am just getting familiar with the medical marijuana scene out here in California, since I only moved here 3 months ago from the DC area. First let me say how refreshing it is to see all the activity! It is very encouraging to those of us in other parts of the country. Second, there is no doubt that many people are helped in many ways by marijuana. MS, chronic pain, AIDS wasting, alcoholism, migraines, epilepsy, asthma, and countless other conditions are alleviated or even reversed by cannabis. It truly can be a wonder drug.

However, I think we all need to admit that the dispensaries are often, perhaps even mostly, used by people who have managed to get a medical card or doctor's recommendation, but who don't use cannabis for medicinal reasons, but rather simply for fun. This is pretty clearly evident by the demographics of who enters the clubs, the advertising, the names of the clubs, etc. Now, I want marijuana fully legalized for everyone, regardless of medical condition. Some medical advocates may share that policy goal, but maybe not all.....

<http://vanorml.org>

The Debate On California's Pot Shops

Morley Safer Reports On Proposition 215 / Sept. 23, 2007

California's Pot Shops: An excerpt from a "60 Minutes" broadcast about California's controversial pot shops, where people can buy marijuana for medicinal use.....Well, how is the California state law working?

As correspondent Morley Safer reports, the answer involves another statute: the law of unintended consequences. For one thing, the federal government still views marijuana, medical or otherwise, as illegal and has been cracking down on dispensaries that sell it. **For another, it's clear there are legions of people buying medical marijuana for the sole purpose of getting high. And for them and the truly ill in California, it's become an easy matter: just drop by your little pot shop around the corner.....**There are hundreds of such stores in the state, and as many as 400 in southern California alone. The people who run them are members of the state's latest entrepreneurial class, calling themselves "caregivers." The feds call them something else. Case in point is a young man of many faces named Luke Scarmazzo. He has been described as a businessman, a hip hop artist, and, by the government, as a drug dealer. Asked which of the descriptions apply to him, Scarmazzo says, "I'm a hip hop artist first. 'Cause that's what I've always been. And I'm a businessman second. But I'm not a drug dealer.".....The DEA hits a handful of businesses like Scarmazzo's every few weeks. And in his case, business was good: in the town of Modesto, population 200,000, he sold \$4.5 million worth of medical marijuana in two years. And he was paid a good salary, too. "I took home \$13,000 a month," he says.....The Supreme Court has upheld the DEA's right to go after dispensaries, no matter what state law might say. And even one of the key proponents of medical marijuana says things have gotten out of hand. "It's just ridiculous the amount of money that's going through these cannabis clubs. It's absolutely ridiculous," says Scott Imler, a minister in the United Methodist Church who has long been active in promoting medical marijuana. Eleven years ago, he was working to pass proposition 215, the ballot measure that legalized it. Today, Imler has second thoughts.

"The purpose of proposition 215 was not to create a new industry. It was to protect legitimate patients from criminal prosecution,"....A decade later, if you've got a note from a doctor, you can buy medical pot for just about any imaginable condition. "Let me just ask you plain and simple. Is there this proliferation because people are simply using, quote, unquote, medical marijuana, to get high?" Safer asks. "I think there's a lot of that. And I think you know, a lot of what we have now is basically pot dealers in storefronts," Imler says.....Television station KCBS went to a Los Angeles clinic, where the waiting room was full of young people, joking about what they'd tell the doctor their ailment was. The doctor, James Eisenberg, saw four healthy people sent by KCBS. He rejected a 17-year-old for being underage. But after getting a brief consultation and paying \$175, the other three got their papers. One complained of dry skin, another of hair loss, and the third said high heels hurt her feet. "Do you think someone who complains of foot pain because of high heeled shoes is a legitimate candidate for medical marijuana?" TV reporter David Goldstein asked Dr. Eisenberg. "You know, all I can do is take my patients' statements as factual," the doctor replied.There's a growing number of local laws limiting the number of dispensaries in a given area and the hours they can operate. But American ingenuity will always find a way. Kevin Reed was forced to shut down his San Francisco dispensary because of complaints from neighbors. So he simply went into the delivery business.....His couriers fan out across the city, delivering their wares. In theory, all the medical marijuana sold in California is grown by the patients themselves. "We're a collective. And what that means is our members grow it, they bring excess medicine here and we provide it back to the other members..."

...But skeptics say it doesn't always work that way, and that old fashioned pot dealers can easily get a compliant doctor to make them patients and caregivers too. "Most of these cannabis centers are buying their marijuana off the black market. They're dumping millions of dollars into the criminal black market," Imler says. "What you're suggesting is that the traditional black market or part of the traditional black market is now legal?" Safer asks. "Yeah. That's essentially what's happened," Imler agrees.....He argues it's time for the federal government to step in and legalize and properly control medical marijuana. "Until that happens, we're gonna have what we have now, which is chaos," he says.

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