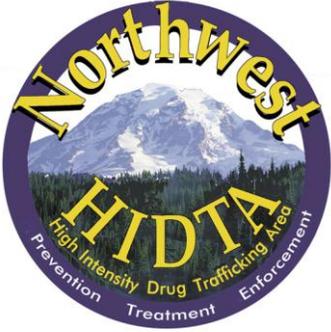


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NORTHWEST HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREA



Washington State 2012 Marijuana Situation Report

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Assessment of the Threat

Marijuana is the most widely abused illicit substance in the state. Domestic marijuana (indoor and outdoor cultivated) remains the most prevalent type available. There has been a surge of local indoor production of high potency marijuana over the past several years, which is similar to Canadian or British Columbia (BC) Bud in that it contains higher levels of delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). This locally-produced high potency marijuana may have replaced Canadian marijuana as seizures for BC Bud have declined at the Washington-British Columbia border. Canadian marijuana is destined for other parts of the United States as the Pacific Northwest region becomes saturated with locally-produced marijuana. Marijuana produced in Mexico is available in lesser quantities when compared to other types of marijuana available in Washington State. There are reports that Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) are developing strains of high THC marijuana in order to remain competitive in this lucrative market.

Social acceptance of marijuana use has occurred gradually in Washington State. For example, the City of Seattle hosts the Annual Hempfest on the third weekend in August each year. Billed in 1991 as a one-day event, the Hemp Expo as it was called then had an estimated 500 people in attendance. The 21st anniversary Hempfest in the summer of 2012 encompassed three Seattle waterfront parks, and had expanded to a three-day event. The event expected to draw 50,000 to 80,000 people per day. As the perception of risks associated with marijuana use continues to diminish – particularly among youth and adolescents – the rate of daily use continues to increase.

Washington State lawmakers recently amended medical marijuana legislation originally enacted in 1998 (RCW Chapter 69.51A), which established collective gardens for patients and caregivers. Voters approved Initiative-502 (I-502), which legalizes recreational use of marijuana. The passage of this law has caused significant changes in policing and prosecuting small user quantities of marijuana. Washington State and Colorado are the only two states to fully legalize possession for adults of 1 ounce or less of marijuana. The impact of these laws within the states

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and the effect that these may have on recreational use legislation in other states has yet to be determined.

Abuse

With regard to marijuana use among Washington State youth, data is obtained from the Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS), given to 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grade students attending public schools throughout the state every other year. A comparison of survey data obtained in 2010 with that obtained in 2012 shows a decrease in past use within 30 days from 1.6% to 1.2% among 6th graders, a decrease from 9.5% to 9.4% among 8th graders, a decrease from 20.0% to 19.3% among 10th graders, and an increase from 26.3% to 26.7% among 12th graders.

The majority of all youth treatment admissions for drugs, legal and illegal, in Washington State are for marijuana, based on information from the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR). There was a 20% increase in youth treatment admissions between 2007 and 2012, with a total of 4,542 last year.

Adult treatment admissions for marijuana in 2012 were down for the third consecutive year with a total of 4,630 admissions according to DBHR. This is nearly 17% below Washington State’s annual averages from 2009 through 2012. Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) statistics for Washington show a slight

increase in marijuana-related treatment admissions with 8,632 people admitted in 2011 (the most recent year for which this data is available), compared to 8,555 in 2010 and 8,795 in 2009. Youth

Varieties of Cannabis Plants:

	<i>Cannabis Sativa</i> – Most widespread variety of plant is tall and can reach a height of 20 feet. THC content varies if hybridized.
	<i>Cannabis Indica</i> – Less widespread than Cannabis Sativa, the cannabis indica plant is pyramidal in shape and generally reaches a height of 3 to 4 feet. THC content varies if hybridized.
	<i>Cannabis Ruderalis</i> – Least desirable of plants, cannabis ruderalis is a small plant containing low amounts of THC.

Source: factsanddetails.com

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treatment admissions appear to have been somewhat steady, as 50 percent of the admissions in 2011 entailed the 12 to 17 year-old age group, while the same age group accounted for 47 percent in 2010 and 45 percent in 2009. TEDS statistics are different from the statistics provided by DBHR in that some treatment agency statistics are not reported to TEDS depending on how the agency is licensed. For example, data from private treatment agencies, hospitals, and some Washington correctional facilities may be excluded.

Information from the Washington State Toxicology Laboratory reveals that of all impaired drivers in Washington for whom drugs were present in their blood, marijuana has consistently been the most common drug detected. In 2008, 17.2 percent of impaired drivers had THC detected in their blood; in 2009 it was 20.6 percent and in 2010 it was 19.5 percent. Methamphetamine was the next most common drug found in impaired drivers, accounting for 7.4 percent in 2008, 7.5 percent in 2009 and 10.6 percent in 2010. It is unknown how many, or if any, of the impaired drivers found with THC present in their blood were approved medical marijuana users.

Availability

Marijuana remains readily available in Washington State. The most widely available type of marijuana in the state remains domestic marijuana, grown either indoors or outdoors. Based upon information from the 2012 Northwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey (TAS), agencies ranked locally-grown indoor and outdoor marijuana as the most available marijuana. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Seattle Field Division, THC levels for domestic marijuana have increased throughout the years and are comparable to Canadian-grown marijuana. Information obtained from the DEA Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program (DCE/SP) showed a decline in outdoor grow seizures for marijuana.

According to the DEA Seattle Field Division, Mexican marijuana cultivators in the state worked in the past to increase potency levels to maintain a market for their product. Local law enforcement and federal seizures of marijuana increased since 2010, though seizures are still not as high as 2009 levels. Agencies responding to the 2012 Northwest HIDTA TAS reported a total of 3,607 kilograms of bulk marijuana seized and 346,335 plants seized in 2011. The totals in

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2010 were 558 kilograms of bulk marijuana and 302,150 plants seized. In comparison, 2009 totals were 4,049 kilograms of bulk marijuana and 595,953 plants seized.

Law enforcement agencies report that the supply of marijuana in the Western United States is higher than the demand for the product. As the price of marijuana continues to decline in Washington, there is more incentive to send marijuana outside the state to areas where the price of marijuana is higher.

Criminal use of modern technology and the Internet by dealers and users has also increased the availability of marijuana. Dealers and users exploit online communities, websites, and blogs such as Craigslist, eBay, sell.com, and a large number of other online-classified websites to place advertisements or requests for the sale or purchase of drugs, paraphernalia, and growing equipment. The perceived anonymity of these Internet venues allows dealers and users to be more brazen in their attempted distribution, sale, and purchase of marijuana and associated paraphernalia. The ability to conceal one's identity on these sites is limited only by the level of technical knowledge and sophistication of the user. The use of encrypted e-mail services, one time messaging systems, and changing network systems to subvert Internet protocol tracking allows users to hide the identity and origins of their messages and postings. Marijuana storefronts also known to the public as dispensaries have also increased the availability of marijuana and marijuana edibles (THC-enriched food products).

Production

Marijuana produced in Washington, Canada, and Mexico is available throughout the state. Indoor grows are typically more prevalent on the west side of the state, while outdoor grows dominate the east side.



Source: Internet

Cannabis Plant Products

Marijuana – Flowering head and leaves of the cannabis plant (male and female plants).

Buds – Resin-gland-rich flowering tops of the female plant.

Sinsemilla (without seed) – Flowering tops of the female plant as a result of being raised with no male plants present.

Source: factsanddetails.com

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According to the DEA Seattle Field Division, the average size of domestic indoor marijuana cultivation operations range from 300 to 750 plants in various stages of cultivation (starters, juvenile plants, and more mature budding plants). Outdoor marijuana grow cultivations can range from 2,000 to 10,000 or more plants. With the increasing public acceptance of medical marijuana and marijuana storefronts, cannabis grows found in individual homes and co-ops have become widespread.

The 2012 Eradication Season uncovered Washington State's first "Plywood grow." Plywood grows are marijuana grows in which plywood boards are used as fencing. These grows are



Source: http://extras.mnginteractive.com/live/media/site208/2012/0919/20120919_051718_BN20-CPS-MARIJUANA_300.jpg

relatively new to Washington State. Plywood grows are commonly found in California where they were traditionally smaller plots and grown under the auspices of medical marijuana.

Recently, eradication teams in California have found large plywood grows – some range from small plots to more than an acre. In Washington State, marijuana cultivations are planted in diverse areas throughout the state: in public forest lands, in private land within legitimate crops, in desert areas, and in the plains. Agents

and officers discovered many marijuana grows located in Eastern Washington interspersed among legitimate crops during the 2011 and 2012 Summer Eradication seasons. The DCE/SP program reported that the majority of outdoor grows were located on public lands and that the cultivation grow plots were smaller and more spread out. During the 2012 Eradication Season, law enforcement eradication team members noted that tenders were responsible for maintaining several grows and managed to rotate among the grows to avoid arrest. In addition, the eradication team found several plots ready for planting.

Information from the DCE/SP program and the Washington State Patrol Cannabis Eradication Response Team (CERT) report that many traditionally known marijuana growing areas, such as those found on several Indian reservations and counties in Southeast Washington and Eastern

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Washington, had fewer grows in 2012. Agents and officers believe that the decline in outdoor marijuana grows were the result of a sustained law enforcement presence in the region; an increased number of marijuana investigations, the identification of DTOs in the state, and the successful state and federal prosecutions of outdoor marijuana grow investigations. Eradication teams reported less marijuana grows in lands belonging to The Confederated Tribes of Colville compared to the previous year, while the grows found at the Yakama Indian Reservation increased from the prior year.

Eradication teams also report that time spent on aerial reconnaissance eradication missions was greater in the 2012 Eradication Season than in the past year. Despite the increased eradication missions, teams documented less outdoor marijuana cultivation sites. This is most likely the result of aggressive, efficient, and successful eradication efforts and techniques.

Southeast Asian criminal groups are the main indoor cannabis cultivators along with Caucasian criminal groups and local independent Caucasian producers. Asian Organized Crime groups are spread throughout the Puget Sound and historically have been located in the greater King, Pierce, and Snohomish County areas; however, they appear to be expanding their operations to Spokane and the Tri-Cities area (Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco). New grow supply stores continue to be established throughout the state and the DTOs are using them to procure grow supplies for their operations.

There is continued evidence that Southeast Asian growers have moved operations from Canada into Washington State in an effort to avoid potential border control problems during transport. This is evident by the significant decrease in southbound marijuana seizures at the border.

Mexican producers continue to dominate the outdoor grow operations in the state. These outdoor grow operations are on private and public lands, which have a profoundly negative effect on national parks, forests, and the mountain regions within the state. In addition, Mexican DTOs have moved their operations from Mexico into Washington.



Source: Aerial of grow location, 2012 erad season

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On average, sinsemilla, whether domestically cultivated or imported from Canada, analyzed at the University of Mississippi Marijuana Potency Monitoring Program (MPMP) has a THC content in the mid-to-high teens, but many samples of marijuana seized at the Washington border with Canada have been analyzed at 20 percent or higher. As a benchmark, one domestically cultivated indoor sample from the Seattle metropolitan area seized in April 2009 was analyzed by the MPMP at 32 percent THC. THC averages for domestically cultivated outdoor cannabis are rising as ethnic Mexican cultivators seek to improve their product to compete with higher-quality indoor cultivated cannabis. MPMP-analyzed DEA Seattle Field Division samples of outdoor domestically cultivated cannabis averaged 11.62 percent but have spiked as high as 23 percent. The THC level of Mexico-produced marijuana is also increasing.

Transportation

In the past, marijuana produced in Canada has been smuggled into Washington in significant amounts. However, marijuana seizure totals at the border have decreased based on Integrated Border Intelligence Team (IBIT) reports. This decline is believed to be due in part to the relocating of Asian criminal groups to Washington and Oregon. By moving their operations to the United States, these organizations can decrease transportation costs by producing high potency marijuana closer to U.S. retail markets, lessening the risk of seizure at the border, and protecting the Command and Control of the Asian DTOs in Canada, by keeping them at a distance from U.S. law enforcement. In 2009, the Northwest HIDTA region saw a large increase in the number of cross border seizures in the eastern part of the state. Law enforcement officials speculate that many trafficking groups are starting to move from Western Washington into areas that are more isolated and rural such as Eastern Washington, Idaho, and Montana. These rural areas are preferred as there is less chance of detection as it is more difficult for law enforcement to reach these rugged areas.

Information from the DEA Seattle Field Division shows that the majority of marijuana smuggled into Washington from Canada is bound for markets in other states. Transporters use almost every mode of transportation known to smuggle Canada-produced marijuana into Washington. A common method is by private and commercial vehicles traveling on Interstate 5 (I-5), national

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forest system roads, and logging roads. Other methods of transportation include aircraft, all-terrain vehicles, boats, commercial buses, cold drops, package delivery and postal services, horses, kayaks, couriers with backpacks, and snowmobiles. The use of aircraft including private planes and helicopters is becoming an increasingly popular method to drop large quantities of marijuana into remote or forested areas of Washington State. Marijuana produced in Canada is also smuggled through Washington, primarily via Seattle, en route to drug markets in surrounding states. Marijuana produced in Canada is often exchanged for cocaine or weapons, which are then smuggled across the border into Canada. Marijuana produced in Mexico is also transported into Washington, but to a lesser extent than marijuana produced in Canada.



Source: Internet - Medical marijuana logo of dispensary located in Belfair, Washington

Law enforcement agencies responding to the 2012 Northwest HIDTA TAS report that marijuana grows and marijuana storefronts are increasing, possibly flooding the marijuana market and could be the reason for lower marijuana prices. In addition, both the DEA and Northwest HIDTA initiatives indicate that many marijuana traffickers are taking their product to new markets, including the Midwest and the Northeast states, where they can get a higher price for their product.

Marijuana was the drug most commonly seized in Washington in 2012, according to Northwest HIDTA Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE) program preliminary statistics. Of 149 seizures that occurred in Washington and reported to the Northwest HIDTA DHE program, 55 involved marijuana. In addition, of seizures that occurred outside of Washington but with a nexus to the state, 84 of the 125 seizures involved marijuana. Of those seizures, the majority took place in Oregon (48), followed by Idaho (12), South Dakota (5), Missouri (4), and Nebraska (4). Other states with Washington-related marijuana seizures include Texas (3), Ohio (2), Arkansas (2), California (1), Georgia (1), Iowa (1), and Kansas (1). Also, marijuana was the drug most commonly seized in 2011, according to Northwest HIDTA DHE program statistics. Of the 120 seizures that occurred in Washington and reported to the Northwest HIDTA DHE program, 70 involved marijuana. In addition, of the seizures that occurred outside Washington, but with a nexus to the state, 190 of 285 of the seizures involved marijuana. Of those seizures, the majority

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took place in Oregon (70), followed by Idaho, Kansas, and South Dakota (each with 6). Montana and Nebraska each accounted for 4 of the marijuana seizures with a nexus to Washington.

Mexican criminal groups, often based in the Seattle-Tacoma area, are the dominant transporters of Mexico-produced marijuana into Washington. These criminal groups often transport Mexico-produced marijuana into the state by private vehicle. Mexican criminal groups also use commercial and private aircraft, boats, buses, trains, and postal services to transport Mexico-produced marijuana into the state.

Distribution

Various criminal groups, local independent dealers, and Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMG) conduct wholesale marijuana distribution in Washington State. Based on information from the 2012 Northwest HIDTA TAS, Caucasian criminal groups and local independent Caucasian dealers are the principal wholesale distributors of marijuana produced in Washington as well as Canada-produced marijuana. Canada-based Asian criminal groups, primarily Vietnamese, and OMG typically supply these criminal groups and dealers.

According to law enforcement, Mexican criminal groups and local independent Mexican dealers are the principal wholesale distributors of the Mexico-produced marijuana available in the state. Intelligence indicates that an increasing number of marijuana traffickers are attempting to establish redistribution cells in other parts of the country, primarily the Midwest and East Coast. This is a result of the higher price for marijuana that can be obtained in other states, as opposed to the relative lower price in the Western United States. Mexican National DTO members from the Yakima Valley have been found in grow locations as far away as Wisconsin.

To a lesser extent, Caucasian criminal groups and local independent Caucasian dealers are also responsible for distributing wholesale quantities of Mexico-produced marijuana. Various criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs conduct retail-level marijuana distribution as indicated in the 2012 Northwest HIDTA TAS. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers are the primary retail distributors of marijuana produced in Washington and Canada. Street gangs and criminal groups also distribute retail quantities of

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marijuana produced in the state and in Canada. Asian criminal groups distribute retail quantities of Canada-produced marijuana, but to a limited extent. Mexican criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs are the principal retail distributors of Mexico-produced marijuana.

Medical Marijuana aka Medical Cannabis

The status of medical marijuana in Washington State remains confusing and contradictory as it is



Street sign common in Washington State

<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=medical+marijuana+advertisement+washington&view=detail&id=51D5AF6E834208C278C8AEED693AD2AF65D2183&first=294>

illegal according to federal law, but permitted under state law.

The conflicting laws make it difficult for law enforcement to know how to respond to medical marijuana growers in collective gardens. It also leaves loopholes for marijuana growers to reap profits under the guise of the designation as caregivers for medical marijuana patients. There are also marijuana storefronts operating in other cities located throughout the state.

Under current Washington law, Revised Code of Washington, (RCW 69.51A Medical Cannabis), the following individuals are exempted from criminal and civil actions:

(2)(a) Qualifying patients with terminal or debilitating medical conditions who, in the judgment of their health care professionals, may benefit from the medical use of cannabis, shall not be arrested, prosecuted, or subject to other criminal sanctions or civil consequences under state law based solely on their medical use of cannabis, notwithstanding any other provision of the law;

(b) Persons who act as designated providers to such patients shall also not be arrested, prosecuted, or subject to other criminal sanctions or civil consequences under state law, notwithstanding any other provision of law, based solely on their assisting with the medical use of cannabis; and

(c) Health care professionals shall also not be arrested, prosecuted, or subject to other criminal sanctions or civil consequences under state law for the proper authorization of medical

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use of cannabis by qualifying patients for whom, in the care professional's professional judgment, the medical use of cannabis may prove beneficial.¹

RCW also establishes that qualifying patients may create and participate in collective gardens for the purpose of producing and distributing cannabis for medical use. Qualified patients or a designated grower may have a 60 day supply of marijuana in their possession at any one time. This is considered up to 15 plants and 24 ounces of useable marijuana. Up to ten qualifying patients may participate in a collective garden, and can have 15 plants and 24 ounces of usable marijuana per patient; but no more than a total of 45 plants and 72 ounces of usable marijuana. While state law is careful to limit who can possess marijuana and how much may be possessed, it does not provide any restrictions on the THC level of the marijuana used.



Source: <http://www.kirotv.com/gallery/entertainment/seattleinsider-pot-power-incredible-edibles-sticky/g6Sn/#2878110>

As the main active ingredient in cannabis, THC is the key to creating the “high” those users feel. Under current state law, marijuana storefronts are not specifically defined or discussed in the legislation. Despite this, these entities are operating throughout the Puget Sound region. Seattle's mayor signed an ordinance in the summer of 2011 that essentially acknowledges the existence of medical marijuana facilities and requires them to follow normal business laws. The medical marijuana facilities are required to have business licenses, follow building codes and obtain food cards when selling food containing marijuana, often referred to as “Medibles” or “Edibles.”

Recent law enforcement actions against marijuana storefronts in the state have uncovered a wide variety of edible marijuana commodities for sale. Storefront owners purchase medibles/edibles from a variety of local and Internet suppliers. The suppliers have proprietary amounts of marijuana and THC in their products – purities can range from product to product. Many of the items are marketed as medicinal foodstuffs or topical skin products. The merchandise includes

¹ Washington State Legislature, RCW 69.51A.005, Purpose and Intent.

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marijuana candies/fruit leathers, brownies, granola bars, cookies, cereals, salsa, salad dressings, oil/butter, and tea to tinctures, balms, bath salts, and elixirs.

The expansion of marijuana storefronts from selling marijuana to adding marijuana-laced/infused foods and products has introduced additional marijuana operations involved in retail marijuana distribution. Some of these entities are operating clandestinely in residences, which increases the risk to the public particularly in regard to fires or armed burglaries. The appearance of these products also creates an impression of legitimacy to the consumers since these products are similar to other legal products for sale.

Concern has been expressed in regard to the manner in which these products are packaged for sale. Many of these products do not mention that they contain marijuana. Candies and cookies appeal to youth and may be a new venue to introduce the drug as well as to conceal drug use.

Legislation

On November 6, 2012, Washington voters approved I-502 which legalizes recreational use of 1 ounce or less of marijuana. The initiative was spearheaded by New Approach Washington. The law took effect on December 6, 2012. The Washington State Liquor Control Board has a year to set rules for taxed and regulated sales at state-licensed marijuana stores. Washington Governor Christine Gregoire and newly-elected Governor Jay Inslee indicated their opposition to the law. The initiative conflicts with federal laws which prohibit the possession, sale, distribution and manufacture of marijuana. The new law does not affect prior laws involving medical marijuana.



Source: <http://www.kentv.com/politics/local/I-502-Passses->

After December 6, 2012

- Possession of 1 ounce or less of marijuana will no longer be a crime for persons over 21 years of age.
- Possession of 16 ounces of marijuana-infused product in solid form or 72 ounces of marijuana-infused product in liquid form or an ounce or less of marijuana will no longer

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be a crime. The law does not permit the separate types of products to be possessed at the same time.

- Possession of between 28.3 grams and 40 grams of marijuana still will be a misdemeanor.
- Possession of more than 40 grams of marijuana still will be a class C felony.
- Possession of any amount of marijuana by a person under 21 years of age will still be a crime.
- Manufacture and/or Delivery of marijuana will still be a crime.
- The Washington State Liquor Control Board has until December 1, 2013 to develop regulations regulating and licensing producers, processors, and retailers. Even once those license provisions are in effect, manufacture and delivery by a person who is not licensed still will be a crime.
- Possession, use, and sale of marijuana-related drug paraphernalia will no longer be a crime or civil infraction.
- Displaying or consuming marijuana or a marijuana-infused product in view of the general public will be a class 3 civil infraction.
- DUI: **Under 21 years** – zero tolerance; over 0.00 nanograms presumed intoxicated **21 and over** – 5.00 nanograms presumed intoxicated²

Under federal law, marijuana is listed as a Schedule I drug under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) **21 U.S.C. § 801, et seq.** To fall under a Schedule I, a drug must meet the following criteria:--

- (A) The drug or other substance has a high potential for abuse.
- (B) The drug or other substance has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States.
- (C) There is a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision.

The conflict between state and federal laws concerning marijuana has minimal impact on many businesses, institutions, and agencies that operate under federal rules and regulations. As a result, areas such as drug-free work places, hiring practices, drug-use testing, drug-free school zones, financial institutions, and transportation industries are not impacted.

Outlook

Marijuana will continue to be the principal drug of abuse in Washington State, and will remain readily available throughout the state. Public misconceptions about marijuana abuse will continue to be an impediment to law enforcement efforts against the drug. Mexican National

² Washington State Patrol, Investigative Assistance Division

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DTOs, Canada-based criminal groups, Caucasian criminal groups, and local independent dealers will remain the principal smugglers and wholesale distributors of marijuana in Washington.

Large, outdoor Hispanic DTO marijuana grows will continue to be prevalent in Washington State even as the Domestic Marijuana Enforcement Initiative and law enforcement continue their efforts at marijuana eradication. Mexican criminal groups will continue to be the principal producers and wholesale distributors of marijuana. Marijuana production within Washington will continue at its current pace, especially with respect to indoor grows that produce high potency marijuana and eliminate the risk of being caught by border security in transport from outside countries.

In addition, it is increasingly possible that Washington State will become a critical part of the marijuana trafficking hub for other parts of the United States, such as the Midwest and northeastern states. The cannabis market has been saturated as a result of the marijuana available from Canada and Mexico, indoor and outdoor grows within the state, and the medical marijuana grows and increasing numbers of marijuana storefronts. The easy availability of the drug makes it plausible that as prices decrease in the Pacific Northwest, traffickers will look for new markets that will pay a higher price.

Data clearly indicates that the media attention and active public discussions concerning both medical marijuana and Initiative 502 have served to diminish the perception of harm associated with marijuana smoking. And as public perception – particularly among youth and adolescents – continues to become more accepting of marijuana, use rises concurrently. Roger Roffman, a professor at the University of Washington and supporter of I-502, has studied marijuana use and dependency for nearly 30 years. In an interview by the *Seattle Times*, Roffman stated “Here’s my guess: Over the next years, we will see greater curiosity about marijuana, among those particularly in that (young adult) age range,”...Curiosity will lead more people to use it who otherwise wouldn’t have.”

As the number of users increases, the number of users for whom marijuana use is problematic



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Source: <http://www.bing.com/images/>

search?q=marijuana+rehab&view=detail&id=74CAE7CDBE4AC88CCC39774CAE7CDBE4AC88CCC397AA92D8CA4F41B3FA94 (Cropped)

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and addictive also increases. Such increases will serve to further strain the capacities of treatment programs and drug court programs throughout the state which are already overwhelmed to the extent that fewer than half of those persons seeking treatment can be served.

The conflict surrounding collective gardens (medical marijuana grows) and marijuana storefronts will continue to escalate as they remain illegal under federal law. Washington State is beginning the rule-making process for full implementation of the law in December 2013. The U.S. Department of Justice has yet to provide guidance or policy regarding these developments.

Questions regarding this report and requests for additional information can be directed to the Northwest HIDTA Investigative Support Center (ISC) at (206) 352-3679 or deconfliction@nw.hidta.org

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