

USA Roundup: Federal, National, California, Minnesota, Ohio, Philadelphia, Virginia

FEDERAL

US GOVT DEPT OF AGRICULTURE PRESS RELEASE

Cleaning Up Illegal Marijuana Grow Sites

<https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2017/08/21/cleaning-illegal-marijuana-grow-sites>

Viscous, stratified, and hot to the touch, a five-gallon water tank bubbled with unknown chemicals at an illegal marijuana grow site in California's [San Bernardino National Forest](#). Marijuana growers most likely planned to use this brew as a high-powered pesticide to keep any and all animals away from their marijuana plants.

On [U.S. Forest Service](#) land in California alone, more than 400 illegal grow sites have been identified. This is in part because international drug organizations have traditionally set up illegal grow sites on national forests in California.

However, organized sites are now popping up as far east as North Carolina, and smaller, unorganized grow sites occur in most states. These sites pose problems for Forest Service law enforcement, the public, and the environment – with pesticides poisoning wildlife, soil, and water.

“There’s no telling what you’ll run into out there,” said Chris Boehm, Deputy Director of [Forest Service Law Enforcement and Investigations](#). Many sites harbor booby traps, and the growers themselves are often armed. Law enforcement agents are trained to safely navigate most of these hazards, but if members of the recreating public encounter a grow site, the situation can quickly turn unsafe.

The bubbling vat on the San Bernardino National Forest is an example of what even law enforcement agents aren’t prepared to handle during an initial raid due to the potential toxicity to both people and the environment.

“Some of the [pesticide] is so concentrated animals die in a matter of minutes, if not seconds,” said Forest Service researcher Craig Thompson.

Researchers frequently find dead squirrels, bears, and birds, and other animals killed by the pesticides used on these grow sites. Once an animal consumes and dies from pesticides, the chemicals continue powering through the entire food web as scavengers feed upon poisoned

carcasses. At one site, researchers found a dead fox, a dead vulture that had been feeding on the fox, and dead insects that had landed on both.

Because growers spray pesticides and add them to irrigation systems, the chemicals also seep into the soil and surrounding waterways, which can kill aquatic species and potentially compromise the safety of people's drinking water downstream.

Because growers spray pesticides and add them to irrigation systems, the chemicals also seep into the soil and surrounding waterways, which can kill aquatic species and potentially compromise the safety of people's drinking water downstream. (Courtesy photo: Flickr/Warren Reed.)

To reduce the grow site impacts and discourage illegal growers from returning, Forest Service and partner law enforcement agents, scientists, safety experts, and others plan and carry out clean-up efforts to remove the plants, irrigation infrastructure, waste, and chemicals. If they leave these resources intact, growers will return and reuse the same site.

Many grow sites are in remote locations and difficult to access, making remediation efforts challenging and costly. Helicopters must be used to air-lift tons of garbage and miles of irrigation piping. Partial HAZMAT protocols must be followed, and decontamination kits used to contain and clean up the waste.

Last year Forest Service staff and partners removed more than 11,000 pounds of trash, 1,250 pounds of fertilizer, and numerous toxic chemicals from just one illegal site.

If you encounter what you believe may be an active grow site here are some suggestions on what to do and what not to do:

DO:

- Leave the area in the same way you came in, retracing your steps.
- Make observations of what you see.
- Once clear of the site, report your findings to the Forest Service or local law enforcement officials and relay your location and observations.

DON'T:

- Linger at the site.
- Call attention to yourself.
- Touch anything that looks out of the ordinary.

NATIONAL

Hoban Law Statement

A Statement from Hoban Law Group and Canna Pro Series on Cannabis World Congress and Roger Stone

Hoban Law Group and **Canna Pro Series** are obviously aware of the horrendous events in Charlottesville and President Trump's response. And, as many of you know, **Mr. Roger Stone is scheduled to be the keynote speaker** at the **Cannabis World Congress and**

[Business Exposition in LA in September](#), and we feel we should respond to the rolling boycott of the conference. Mr. Stone is a self-proclaimed “key figure” in President Trump’s election, and his ongoing affiliation with the President is alarming. Stone’s [personal history of vulgar, misogynistic and racist comments](#) are befuddling and should be condemned. To be sure, we vehemently disagree with these sorts of comments and the overall attitude of Stone and President Trump toward these important social issues in America. We know the cannabis industry is strong, diverse and resilient and it will chart its own course independent of these deplorable ways of thinking. That said, due to the hard work of our organizers and the advance registration of our workshop attendees, we have decided to continue as planned with the [“Hemp MBA in a Day” pre-conference workshop on September 13th](#). We certainly hope that CWCBE organizers will reconsider their invitation to Mr. Stone, but if they do not, we look forward to educating our guests on the emerging industrial hemp industry in California and the United States, and will continue with our vigorous collaborative efforts to support inclusion and diversity in the cannabis industry.

Sincerely, Robert T. Hoban
Managing Partner, Hoban Law Group
Founder, Canna Pro Series

Article: The Medical Marijuana Industry Needs A Reliable Banking Services

Source: Marijuana Stocks.com

<http://marijuanastocks.com/the-medical-marijuana-industry-needs-a-reliable-banking-services/>

It is well known that any bank which is insured by the federal government (FDIC), is forbidden from knowingly handling money that comes from any federally illegal business. Since cannabis still stands at a schedule I regulation, most banks cannot touch money that comes from the state regulated, legal marijuana industry. This makes it difficult when businesses try to handle basic tasks such as payroll, taxes, and finances.

[Multiple 2018 marijuana legalization campaigns already underway](#)

CALIFORNIA

Cannabis Business Executive

[Banking the Cannabis Industry: Takeaways from the California Cannabis Banking Working Group](#)

MINNESOTA

[Minnesota tribe entering the hemp business](#)

OHIO

The Department of Commerce today announced that Metrc, a Franwell company, has been selected as the vendor for the Medical Marijuana Control Program’s seed-to-sale system. The Department of Commerce also announced today that Persistent Systems Inc., has been selected for the Medical Marijuana Control Program’s eLicensing system.

The seed-to-sale system is mandated by House Bill 523, the enabling legislation for the Ohio Medical Marijuana Control Program, and will be used by all medical marijuana licensees to track

medical marijuana throughout the entire process of cultivation, processing, testing and sale. The eLicensing system will be used to track licensees and their employees. Both were selected after a competitive bid process. For more details please visit: <http://medicalmarijuana.ohio.gov/resources>.

PHILADELPHIA

Article: Philly Area Law Firms Bullish Despite Grave Legal Risks

Source Philly.com

<http://www.philly.com/philly/business/cannabis/philly-area-law-firms-bullish-on-cannabis-despite-grave-legal-risks-20170821.html>

Lawyers going into the marijuana business face potential arrest, disbarment, and even imprisonment. But they're gambling that the smoke will clear, and the federal government will eventually legalize cannabis.

Many of Philadelphia's biggest firms — [Duane Morris](#), [Fox Rothschild](#), and [Cozen O'Connor](#) among them — have set up practices recently to serve cannabis growers, dispensaries, and related entrepreneurs as the state aggressively gears up to make medical marijuana available to patients by early 2018. Last month, [Pepper Hamilton](#) "formalized" its marijuana industry group.

"We saw it as a growth opportunity," said [Joseph C. Bedwick](#), partner at Cozen O'Connor. But the continuing disconnect between state and federal laws, and the Trump administration's antipathy toward marijuana, has created what Bedwick calls "a big ball of uncertainty."

More at link above

VIRGINIA

[UPDATE: Virginia Marijuana Decriminalization Forum Rescheduled](#)