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## Denver Pot Plants Quarantined Due To Possible Pesticides

March 23, 2015 3:59 PM

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(credit: CBS)

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**DENVER (AP)** – The city of Denver has ordered commercial pot growers to quarantine hundreds of marijuana plants because of possible pesticide violations.

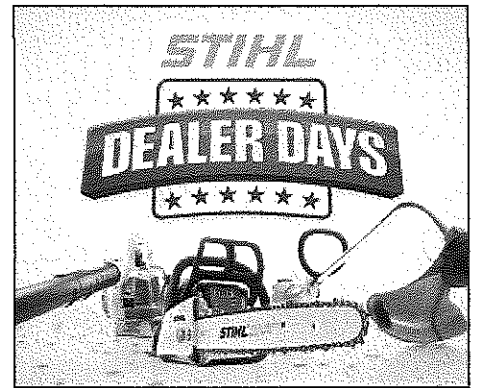
The order affects six commercial marijuana growers. It is the first time Colorado health authorities have taken pot plants out of the state's regulated market because of health concerns.

The quarantine came after Denver Fire Department inspectors noticed improper pesticide or fungicide applications.

"Some growers were not using pesticides accordingly to their labels, including applying some that specifically state are not to be used on crops that will be consumed by humans," Denver spokesman Dan Rowland said Monday.

Denver has ordered all 371 licensed pot growing facilities in the city to report on what pesticides they use by April 1.

Some of the complaints came from workers in the grow facilities, Rowland said.



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The city wouldn't name the six locations cited. The plants represent a small percentage of the city's overall crop, and there were no immediate reports of sickened consumers.

The quarantine means the marijuana can't be sold and that the owners must await further action from health authorities. The plants could be destroyed, but Rowland said it will take about a week to get test results on the quarantined plants.


The state of Colorado has long had "best practices" type of guidance for pesticide use by pot growers, but the state has yet to conclude work on implementing rules for pesticide use in the industry.

Agriculture regulators generally require pesticides to be used as labeled. But because there aren't any pesticides labeled for use on marijuana, growers are asked to use pesticides labeled for "unspecified crops and/or plants."

**LINK: Denver Pot Pesticide Bulletin**

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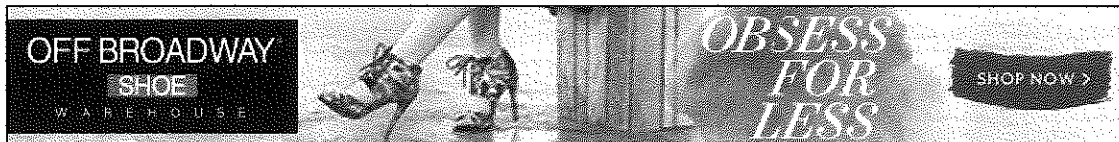
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## Denver pot sales blocked over unapproved pesticides

Denver pot sales blocked over unapproved pesticides. 9NEWS at 6 p.m. 04/28/15.

Chris Vanderveen, KUSA 9:43 p.m. MDT April 28, 2015



(Photo: KUSA)

DENVER – City officials have temporarily barred the sale of potentially millions of dollars worth of legal marijuana over concerns it has been contaminated by unapproved pesticides.

On Friday alone, city officials, after consulting with state agriculture inspectors and the EPA, placed a "hold" on approximately 60,000 plants at a single grow facility in Denver. They have previously placed crops from 10 other facilities on similar holds, which allows the plants to keep growing but blocks their sale.

A mature marijuana plant can be worth more than \$4,000, but it's unclear where these plants were in the growing process. Because marijuana is such a lucrative crop, some growers are taking shortcuts to improve their harvest by spraying young plants with pesticides that aren't approved for human consumption.

Denver city officials' actions came after months of waiting for their state counterparts to launch a long-awaited state monitoring program for contaminants. Colorado officials initially said their pesticide and mold testing would begin in the middle of last year, and then early this year, but they still can't say when they will begin that mandatory testing. Marijuana "flower" – the buds most people are familiar with – is only tested for potency. Washington state, the only other state with a functioning recreational marijuana marketplace, also does not test marijuana for pesticide contamination.

"This is an initiative that Denver is taking on to really make sure consumers do not get into harm's way," said Danica Lee with the Denver Department of Environmental Health. "It is fair to say there are some practices out there that could pose a public health risk, and we are intervening in those cases."

A few weeks ago, records obtained by 9Wants to Know indicate One Grow, RINO Supply, voluntarily destroyed 1,500 plants after the city placed the plants in what amounts to a city-enforced quarantine.



One of the main pesticides in question, according to city records, is a substance known as Eagle 20. The city has targeted E20 because of concern it could be inhaled during the use of marijuana.

"Certainly one of the things we are looking at is, Does the pesticide have any application on commercial food products," said Lee. The Colorado Department of Agriculture will not comment on whether it has found any "unacceptable levels" of unapproved pesticides citing ongoing investigations.

Tuesday night, the owner of LivWell told 9Wants to Know his grow has been unfairly targeted by the City of Denver. His grow is the one that currently has the approximately 60,000 plants on "hold" status due to the city's declaration it may be using Eagle 20.

"We do not use any banned pesticide in our grow," owner John Lord said. "We take this very, very seriously. We take public health very, very seriously. We do not feel there is a concern."

At issue in the debate between the city and growers like LivWell is the issue of what can and cannot be used when it comes to pesticides. Lord insists the pesticide he uses is not banned by the Colorado Marijuana Enforcement Division and thus remains acceptable to use. He also says Denver isn't "qualified" to make a decision on what can and cannot be used on the indoor crop.

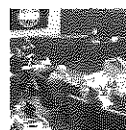
"We are hopeful we can get this cleared up in the next few days," added Lord.

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