

DANGER!

If you suspect a grow house
in your area...

Dangers associated with a marijuana grow house

- The marijuana that is produced is shipped to the U.S. and returns as laundered cash, guns, heroin and ecstasy.
- Alterations made to a grow house may make the house uninhabitable for future residents without major repairs.
- There is a risk of violence and residual crime in neighbourhoods linked with this illegal activity.
- Theft of electricity leads to higher utility bills for ALL paying customers.
- Grow houses are 40 times more likely to have fires than normal houses.
- Shock and electrocution hazards can be created by illegal electrical bypasses charging the ground.
- Emergency responders are exposed to hazardous conditions.
- Grow houses may be 'booby-trapped' to injure or kill trespassers and emergency service workers.
- Health hazards associated with a marijuana grow house are caused by mould, mildew and chemicals that are used in plant growth. These can result in respiratory problems & allergies.
- High levels of humidity can cause wood to eventually warp, including staircases, floor finishes and roof joists.
- As many as 10,000 children may have been in Ontario grow houses between 2000 and 2003.

If you suspect there is a grow house operation in your neighbourhood, it is important that you contact local police or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

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CRIME  STOPPERS

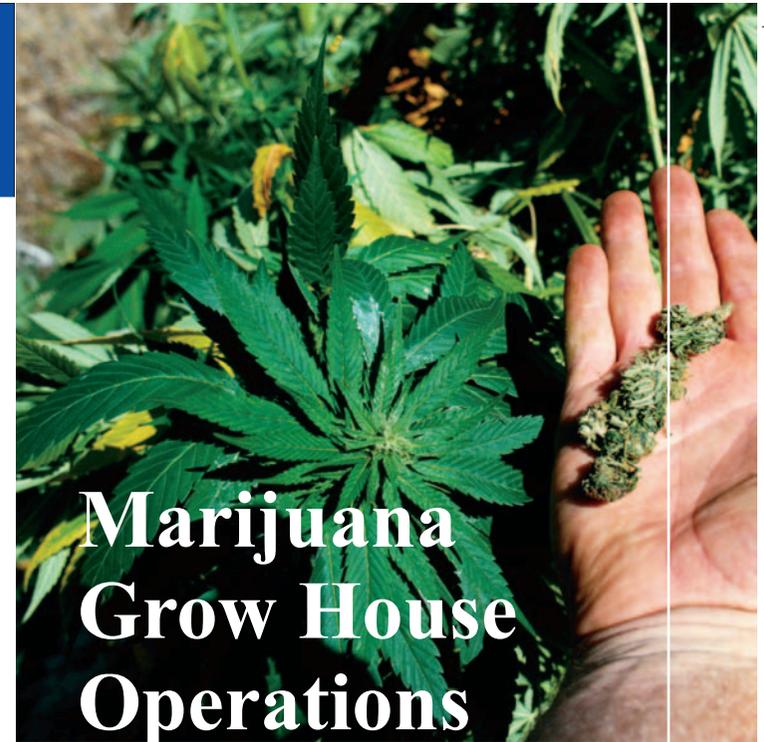
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Marijuana Grow House Operations

What You Need
To Know

OREA Ontario
Real Estate
Association

As REALTORS®, we know you want to live in a safe, caring community where you can build your future, raise your children and get to know your neighbours.

Unfortunately, marijuana grow house operations being set up in houses and apartments throughout Ontario are threatening our safety and our communities.

All of us have a role to play in ensuring our communities are safe. This brochure will help you and your neighbours understand the marijuana grow house problem and how you can protect yourself, your families and your communities from this illegal activity.



What is a marijuana grow house?

A marijuana grow house is a house which has been physically altered to produce marijuana. These alterations may include tapping into the hydro lines in order to steal electricity, attaching filtering devices to hide the skunky-scent produced by marijuana plants or installing high-wattage lights which can be a fire hazard.

Typically, large scale sophisticated marijuana grow houses are linked to organized crime. Organized crime rings purchase or rent a house and buy the equipment required to grow the marijuana. The harvested marijuana is then sold on the streets with the profit going back into the criminal organization.

A grow house operation can generate as much as \$1,000,000 in tax-free cash which is then used to finance various organized criminal activities.

Marijuana grow operations can be located in any rural, urban or industrial area.

From 2000 to 2003, these illegal operations cost the Ontario economy upwards of \$260 million.

How does a marijuana grow house affect me?

A typical grow house steals between \$1,500 - \$2,000 worth of hydro each month. One hydro company estimates customers pay an additional \$50.00 on their monthly hydro bill to cover these costs!

We also pay increased insurance premiums as a result of fire related costs and repairs to structural damages.

Spotting a marijuana grow house

- The house does not appear 'lived in'. Someone occasionally enters the residence and only stays for short period of times.
- Activity inside the house seems to take place at odd hours. Items are moved in and out of the residence at odd times.
- The exterior appearance of the property is not cared for on a regular basis (i.e. snow removal, grass cutting).
- Persons often back into the garage and enter the house this way.
- Garbage is minimal and may contain used soil and plant material.
- Windows are covered.
- Bright light can be seen escaping from windows. Windows are often covered with condensation.
- Sounds of interior construction may be heard.
- Timers may be set inside the residence.
- Marijuana houses can produce a strong skunk-like odor.
- Items being brought into the house include soil, planters, fans and large lights.
- Garbage bags are being taken out of the house and transported away.
- A grow house may not have snow on the roof when the other houses in the area will.
- Unusual amounts of steam from vents.

