

Opinion: Marijuana growers need a permit

By Brian Uhler

Marijuana is a major concern for many in our city. As part of the City Code, our City Council provided for a safer community by allowing marijuana grow operations only after a permit is obtained. The permit process provides for a building official to inspect for things like:

1. Safe wiring – Adding a large number of “grow lights” overburdens conventional electric outlets and can cause fires.
2. Proper ventilation – Too many marijuana plants in an area where people live can be hazardous, so the law limits the total square footage for a grow operation to be smaller than 10 percent of the available space.
3. Proper permission – Especially in the case of rentals, the permit process requires that the owner gives permission to grow marijuana. Many home owners have been left with extensively damaged homes from illegal marijuana growing.
4. Minimal impact to neighbors – The code requires growers to filter or control odors that may impact neighbors.



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In South Lake Tahoe, there are currently only two permitted grow operations. The police department estimates that there

are approximately 300 actual grow operations within the city. This said, we ask for two things:

1. People who have a grow operations should get their permit. They can do so by calling the city's permit center at 530.542.6020 or 530.542.6010.

2. People who know of a grow operation in their neighborhood should call SLEDNET at 530.542.6029. (Leave a message after hours.) Or log onto the city's website, click the communications tab at the top of the page and use "report a concern."

Your police department and SLEDNET have continued the effort to locate and close illegal and unsafe marijuana grows. This will continue to be a priority because our community's safety depends upon it.

Last month, we reported on the Live at Lakeview event and concerns about either not enough or too much police presence. I'm pleased to say that the community responded well to the concerns raised. Despite several issues during the first two events, the events throughout July have been good events and as family friendly as possible.

Brian Uhler is the police chief for South Lake Tahoe.