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BUSINESS

Updated: DEA Raids Four L.A. Area Dispensaries, Arrests 3

By **David Downs** on April 16, 2013 at 1:15 PM

We're getting several reports from groups like **Americans for Safe Access** that the Drug Enforcement Administration is raiding two Los Angeles area dispensaries today.

D.E.A. agents are raiding **Marina Caregivers** in Marina Del Ray, CA. as well as **Zen Healing** in West Hollywood, sources report.

"Zen healing in west hollywood(a fully permitted, legal dispensary) & Marina Caregivers in Marina Del Rey were both raided today by the DEA!" tweeted Buds and Roses Collective, a big winner in the High Times Medical Cannabis Cup Los Angeles this Winter.

Cannabis remains a federally illegal schedule 1 drug, while the state of California permits qualified patients, caregivers, collectives and cooperatives to grow and sell the plant.

Raids have been an ongoing facet of the medical marijuana scene in greater Los Angeles since U.S. Attorneys started a crackdown on California marijuana businesses in October of 2011.

Attorney General Eric Holder has said the Dept. of Justice is only going after pot businesses violating both state and federal law. In reality, U.S. Attorneys have closed dozens of locally permitted, well-run medical cannabis outlets in the state.

West Hollywood has regulated its medical cannabis dispensaries and is considered a model community for safe access. Raiding Zen Healing is a blow to a business trying to play by the rules. The eight year-old Marina Caregivers lies in Marina Del Ray, an affluent part of unincorporated Los Angeles County. County officials have been notoriously recalcitrant when it comes to respecting the will of California voters – who passed Prop 215 in 1996 and the Medical Marijuana Program Act in 2003.

ASA is asking locals to get to the locations of Marina Caregivers (730



Zen Healing – a lawful permitted dispensary in West Hollywood raided by the D.E.A. today

Washington Blvd., Marina Del Rey, CA 90292) and Zen Healing (8464 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069) to “support the victims of federal attacks” [and] “Be a part of the peaceful protest.”

The D.E.A. has not issued any statements on the raids.

UPDATED 7 p.m.: According to a Beverly Hills paper **The Courier**, the raids were part of a large operation across the Los Angeles area targeting four total dispensaries. It included 11 search warrants and three arrests were made.

The four-year-long investigation by the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, the Santa Monica Police Department, the Los Angeles Police Department, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the United States Secret Service identified 20 suspects and seized millions in cash.

The three arrested have been charged with 46 felony counts related to hiring “known gang members as enforcers, who used violence and intimidation to dissuade competition, Lieutenant Lincoln Hoshino of the Beverly Hills Police Department said. ... ‘the organization has been involved in the commission of 26 documented crimes, including Attempted Murder, Home Invasion Robbery, Conspiracy, Arson, Extortion, Residential Burglary, Assault with a Deadly Weapon and Use of a Destructive Device’.”

Search warrants were also executed at: “Alternative Herbal Health Services” (AHHS) of West Hollywood “La Brea Compassionate Caregivers” of Los Angeles.

“The three suspects taken into custody were identified as Andrew Kramer, 38, Rene Johnson, 50, and Jonathan Livingston, 43, all of Los Angeles.”