

### **Medicinal Marijuana in California Legal**

Medical marijuana (or medicinal marijuana, however one refers it) in California has taken an unexpected legal turn. Here are many questions. Is medical marijuana legal in California for medicinal purposes? Should medical marijuana be legalized for the critically ill? Can marijuana be used properly in by medical professionals in a medicinal setting to staff disease without flourishing recreational marijuana use? Well, no one knows for sure, but in a surreal story, Santa Cruz city officials literally just broke legal marijuana statutes!

### **Medical Marijuana**

Medical marijuana use has been debated, battled, fought and a cause for arrest in California. After DEA agents engaged in a [medicinal marijuana drug bust](#) repeatedly at medicinal marijuana cafe's serving medical marijuana to supposedly ill citizens, all hell simply broke loose in the sunny cavalier state of California. Citizens of California were so outraged by these drug busts on medical marijuana clubs that outraged turned fever pitch. In what can only be described as a hallucinogenic Kodak moment, the esteemed Mayor of Santa Cruz, California, Mr. Christopher Krohn, stunned onlookers by attending a gathering where medical marijuana was given away. Also in attendance were two former Santa Cruz mayors. Now, one question: Why did the elected city officials not only bare witness to the distribution of medical marijuana for medicinal purposes, but encourage it? Bafflingly, all were there to protest a recent raid on a local medical marijuana club. As reported in numerous outlets, this was a "direct challenge" to the DEA. While the mayor didn't physically possess or handle the medical marijuana, a crime was committed, and he wasn't sure if he'd end up in jail or not. From the looks of things, the major did not care.

With multiple use in critically ill patients within a medical setting, medicinal marijuana has well known benefits. The US Supreme Court overturned a '96 ruling that made medical marijuana distribution legal in lieu of Federal statutes, but is legal by California's governing state laws. In other words, California citizens, if ill, can smoke and grow marijuana, buy medicinal marijuana, and do anything they want to marijuana for medical purposes without breaking California state law. But, since using medical marijuana for medicinal purposes is still a Federal offense, the local DEA will swoop in and arrest them for smoking pot. Does this make sense? Not really. Especially in the rich, well-known state of California chock full of powerful dignitaries and renowned celebrities. So, what happened here in Santa Cruz was a protest against this awkward medical marijuana policy of unprecedented levels. The people of Santa Cruz rudely said "f--k you" in no uncertain terms to the federally ran DEA, and did so without much retort from fellow state officials. The DEA, on the other hand, wasn't so happy, because they don't make the laws; they enforce them, including those written for marijuana.

Marijuana is the most widely used recreational drug in the United States. It doesn't take a leap of faith to surmise that regular, healthy citizens will take advantage of

California's legal medical marijuana statute just so they can smoke pot under the guise of medicinal purposes. This is the DEA's stance, and at least in part, seems accurate, but the collateral damage, so to speak, has been deemed unacceptable by local authorities.

Marijuana clubs that distribute the drug for medicinal purposes have been primary targets. One high profile club was given a huge level of publicity for [growing pot in San Francisco for medical marijuana](#) purposes, but to some marijuana clubs, this is no laughing matter. In early September, the DEA raided a Santa Cruz medical marijuana club owned by the folks who played an instrumental role in drafting Proposition 215, the now infamous 1996 California medical marijuana incentive. The two owners are now in hiding, "fearful of federal harassment." This medical marijuana farm was in full compliance with the state's marijuana law for over ten years, which suggests no foul play was present. The medicinal marijuana drug bust shocked Mayor Krohn who defended the marijuana farm raid as "unannounced and against the will of the people" but added the DEA was beneficial in addressing California's heroin problem.

### **A Strong Message for Legal Medicinal Marijuana**

Even more shocking is the action of California Attorney General, Bill Kockyer, who requested a meeting with none other than United States Attorney General, John Ashcroft, about the medical marijuana raid problem. Kockyer criticized "punitive expeditions" against "locally authorized medical marijuana operations." The heavy hitters are going to bat against each other, and who will reign victorious remains to be seen. However, all of these medicinal marijuana drug raids and medical marijuana rallies come only months before the November elections. Not only will California citizens vote on its politicians, they'll be able to cast their vote on a myriad of medical marijuana proposals, such as growing marijuana for medical patients in a business setting.

Marijuana, medicinal, medical or recreational, is about to reach paramount proportions by these recent actions. At the Santa Cruz rally, people were reportedly seen smoking marijuana in front of City Hall. The ill also gathered, garnering much emotion, as there were patients with one leg, AIDS victims, women with breast cancer, and people confined to wheelchairs. Medicinal marijuana has more heart-tugging proponents than perhaps any other controversial bill on the California ballot. Hopefully there will be peace in the state where both local and Federal governments come to an amicable agreement over medical marijuana in California.

Resources:

*The New York Times*  
*The Associated Press*