

Is Your Neighborhood Going to Pot (Literally)? How Much Worse Will It Get?

Recently I heard a report that over 1,000 homes in Colorado have been transformed into grow houses for marijuana, and I know from my real estate work that it is becoming a serious problem for subdivisions and home owners and for buyers and sellers.

I have also been told that there's a shortage of industrial buildings because of grow operations consuming all the available listings.

Industrial operations are one thing, but when individual homes are made into grow houses, the consequences can be serious both for that home and for the neighborhood.

Grow operations require lots of electricity (for lighting) and lots of water for irrigation. Each of these pose their own threats. If the electricity is not installed professionally, it could result in fires. And there is almost no way to avoid the growth of mold, including toxic mold, when you dramatically increase the humidity within a house.

Lastly, the smell of the plants infuses a house and is as hard to remove as tobacco smoke.

Neighbors become aware immediately of a grow operation because of the distinctive odor being emitted from the house. Another common complaint is the noise emitted by industrial ventilation systems in many installations.

The situation has grown serious enough that the Denver division of the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) published a four-page document in

It's National Drive Electric Week This Sunday in Golden

Every September, Golden Real Estate is happy to participate in National Drive Electric Week, offering our parking lot on South Golden Road as a place for owners of electric vehicles to meet with would-be owners, open their hoods and trunks and answer the many questions which non-owners have about driving electric. Some owners will be offering rides.

Myself, I have owned a Chevy Volt since 2012, a rear-wheel-drive Tesla since 2014, and an all-wheel-drive Tesla since May 2015. Like every EV owner, I have become an evangelist for EV's and am happy to share my enthusiasm and answer your questions.

This Sunday's event takes place from 9 am to 3 pm at our office, 17695 S. Golden Road. Whether you are bringing your own EV or just coming to speculate, you can register at www.DriveElectricWeek.info or just show up. In addition to the usual Teslas, Volts and Leafs, you'll see a Tesla Roadster, an EV conversion, a Smart for Two electric drive and probably others.

If you miss this event, we're holding another EV roundup on Saturday, Oct. 1st, 9am-3pm.

June 2016 with the title, "Residential Marijuana Grows in Colorado: The New Meth Houses?" The 2-paragraph Executive Summary reads as follows:

"Colorado's state laws legalizing marijuana do not limit how much marijuana can be grown within a private residence. Further, there is no mechanism at the state-level to document or regulate home grows, even large ones. This has led to a proliferation of large-scale marijuana grow operations in hundreds of homes throughout the state. Much of the marijuana produced in large home grows is shipped out of Colorado and sold in markets where it commands a high price.

"Although growing a large number of marijuana plants within private residences can fall within the parameters of state law, it presents potential risk to the occupants, homeowners, and neighbors of these residences, as well as to first responders who are called to them. Marijuana grows often cause extensive damage to the houses where they are maintained and are increasingly the causes of house fires, blown electrical transformers, and environmental damage. Much like the meth houses of the 1990s, many of these homes may ultimately be rendered uninhabitable."

Although the State Constitution allows any adult

over 21 to grow up to 6 plants — each of which can produce a pound of marijuana every 90 days — it has a loophole which states that any citizen can assist another citizen in growing their 6 plants, making it nearly impossible to prosecute someone who is in fact growing hundreds of plants.

What is the outlook in coming years? The final paragraph of the DEA report paints a distressing picture: "Adding to the list of unintended consequences of marijuana legalization in Colorado, the proliferation of large residential grows is taxing local police and fire departments, consuming power and water resources, and potentially affecting home values in communities throughout the state. Further, the ability to establish large-scale marijuana grow operations within residential homes under the guise of state law will likely continue to attract drug traffickers and criminal organizations. Thus, Colorado will continue to be a source for much of the marijuana destined for markets in other states."

I have put a link for this document online at www.JimSmithColumns.com. It's worth reading.

Don't Miss a Single Column!

You can read this column (and previous ones) at www.JimSmithColumns.com, but you can also get it by email. Ask me at Jim@GoldenRealEstate.com

This Week's New Listing From Golden Real Estate

Walk to Light Rail and Kyffin Elementary From This Home



This 3-bedroom, 2½-bath Cape Cod-style home at 444 Flora Way in the Sixth Avenue West subdivision reminds me of my New England upbringing, and I love it! It has been beautifully updated, especially the kitchen and bathrooms. An addition on the back turned a standard 2-car garage into a 3-car tandem garage with lots of sunlight and space! The covered patio in back is a great space for entertaining, as is the huge living room with brick fireplace. Other features include a main-floor study, with beautiful hardwood in it, on the stairs and in the upstairs hallway and master bedroom. The basement is half-finished with both a family room with free-standing gas fireplace and lots of storage. From the front you'd think this was a one-story home, but in fact it has three spacious bedrooms upstairs, all with his-and-her closets and windows to the backyard. You'll love it as I did! I narrated a YouTube video tour of the home (including drone footage) which you can view at www.6thAveWestHome.com. We'll be holding it open this Saturday, 11 am to 1 pm.

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