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Study Finds Marijuana Odors Significantly Associated With Marijuana Grows

(ANCHORAGE, Alaska) – Utilizing funds acquired from federally forfeited illegal drug proceeds, the Alaska State Troopers (AST) commissioned the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Justice Center to analyze three years of marijuana grows which were discovered by AST.

The UAA study analyzed 200 marijuana grow searches conducted by AST during calendar years 2006, 2007 and 2008.

Marijuana was found and seized in 197 of the AST cases, or in 98.5% of the cases reviewed.

The primary purpose of the study was to provide an empirical estimate of the extent to which AST investigators' detection of marijuana odors served as a reliable indicator of the presence of illegal quantities of marijuana in structures.

Out of the 200 cases reviewed investigators reported detecting the odors in 121 cases or in 60.5% of the cases.

"Detection of marijuana odors was found to be significantly associated with the discovery of relatively large amounts of marijuana – that is, quantities of four ounces or more, as well as 25 or more plants."

The report indicates the odds of AST discovering four ounces or more of marijuana were 2.7 times greater than the odds when a search was not preceded by the detection of odor.
Additionally, the odds of AST discovering 25 or more marijuana plants following the detection of odor were 2.9 times greater than the odds when a search was not preceded by the detection of odor.

The study titled, "The Predictive Validity of Marijuana Odor Detection" analyzed a total of 115 variables, the entire 53 page report can be found on the following web site:
http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/research/2010/1110.ast.marijuana/1110.01.marijuanua.html.

Questions about the study can be referred to: Brad A. Myrstol, Ph.D.
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