



Roll Call Training Bulletin

Produced by: Ofc. Brian Webb, Marijuana Compliance Team
Prepared by: Ofc. Rose Cabrera, PSU

Daniel Hahn, Chief of Police
Volume 77

EXPOSURE CONCERNS WITH BANNED PESTICIDE FOUND IN CALIFORNIA MARIJUANA GROWS

Recent reports from media outlets and law enforcement sources from California indicate an increase in seizures of the pesticide carbofuran, discovered at outdoor marijuana cultivation sites on public lands. While the pesticide is effectively banned in the United States, many of the products seized in California have been imported by growers from Mexico. Carbofuran, commonly sold under the brand name Furadan, is intended for use on crops. The pesticide is highly concentrated and can be lethal in very small amounts. According to research, carbofuran was found to be present in 72 percent of the grow sites on public lands.

Traces of carbofuran have been discovered in marijuana grown at sites where evidence of the pesticide has been found, but the impact on consumers remains unknown. Since 2014, numerous officers in California who entered grow sites where this chemical was found reported side effects related to exposure, which included headaches, nausea and a burning sensation in the extremities. Some officers required medical attention after exposure. Carbofuran is highly toxic to vertebrates – a quarter teaspoon (1 ml) is potentially fatal to humans. Typically found in granular or liquid form, exposure can occur through inhalation, ingestion, and contact with the eyes or skin. The product is often pink in color and has been found in containers such as water bottles and sprayers. The chemical may also be sprayed on the plants, which increases exposure risks during marijuana eradication operations.

According to the Centers for Disease Control exposure to carbofuran may affect the central nervous system, resulting in convulsions and may cause respiratory issues. The effects may be delayed and could result in death. Symptoms may include dizziness, vomiting, difficulty breathing and muscle cramps. Proper use of personal protection equipment such as gloves, safety glasses and breathing protection are recommended. **Avoid skin contact and wash exposed skin with soap and water immediately after handling.** Any exposure should be medically evaluated or monitored.

DO NOT:

- Take work clothes home after exposure without proper cleaning to avoid accidental exposure to family and pets.
- Use alcohol-based disinfecting hand cleaners – these only increase the absorption of the pesticide across the skin.

Law enforcement agencies in Oregon, California, and Idaho continue to discover marijuana grows located on public lands with similar chemicals. Caution should be taken when handling any chemical or substance found within these types of cultivation sites. If chemicals and/or substances are contained and do not pose a current safety risk to the officers and/or public, then the officer shall document and photograph the area when appropriate. If the chemicals and/or substances are not contained, it is recommended that the officer not make any attempt to handle and/or take possession of the products. The City of Sacramento Fire Department shall be requested to respond. Currently, there are no known criminal violations for possession of such products.



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The above containers were repurposed to mix/store Carbofuran at an illegal marijuana grow site in Santa Barbara County, CA in 2018.

Growers may have covered the bottles in green plastic to mark them as dangerous.

- The bottle labeled Metafos 600 CE contains Methyl Parathion which is a highly potent organophosphorus based pesticide, which is different from Carbofuran.
- Be on the alert for pink-colored liquids/solids as seen in the Aquafina bottle containing a pink liquid.
- **Be cautious with bug sprayers and other application equipment.**

PLEASE USE CAUTION WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER OUTDOOR MARIJUANA CULTIVATIONS, AS THESE CHEMICALS COULD BE PRESENT.