

SOUTH CAROLINA LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION



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POT ERADICATION EFFORTS IN FOUR COUNTIES

The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) and several law enforcement agencies have completed a 3-day marijuana eradication effort in York, Chester, Lancaster and Fairfield Counties.

The operation dubbed “The I-77 Corridor Marijuana Eradication Project,” was implemented from July 21-July 23, 2009 and was made possible through the expertise of approximately 120 law enforcement officers representing the following agencies:

York County Sheriff’s Office, York County Multi-jurisdictional Drug Unit, Chester County Sheriff’s Office, Chester Police Department, Lancaster County Sheriff’s Office, Fairfield County Sheriff’s Office, SC National Guard’s Counter-Drug Task Force, South Carolina Forestry Commission, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, United States Forestry Service and United States Drug Enforcement Administration.

Director Reggie Lloyd says, “SLED and other agencies have historically found significant marijuana manufacturing operations across the state every year. These operations will aggressively continue as long as criminals continue to manufacture and distribute drugs in South Carolina. These recent seizures have stopped marijuana from making it to the streets.”

SLED’s Aviation Unit and DNR pilots performed aerial surveillance in order to help “spot” the marijuana across the I-77 corridor.

The pilots’ information helped law enforcement on the ground, locate and remove the marijuana plants from various fields.

In all, more than 25-hundred plants were seized and destroyed in Chester County off Fishing Creek Church Road near the York County line and off of Highway-97 between Chester and Interstate-77.

Chester County Sheriff Richard Smith says, “Chester County is prime real estate for illegal pot growers. The continued efforts of law enforcement like these have proven very successful. We have seized thousands of pot plants in just a few months of the grow season here in Chester County. This sends a strong message that if you grow it we will put you out of business.”

SLED Narcotics Lieutenant Max Dorsey says, “This marijuana project was in response to an increase in pot growing operations that have regionally plagued the I-77 Corridor for several years.”

Eradication missions happen yearly during the marijuana grow season which is typically from April to September.

Lancaster County Sheriff Barry Faile says, “I think these missions are good for all of us to work together. We can certainly make big strides when we do this. We all have the same goal and that is making our communities as safe as we can for the people we serve.”

Law enforcement is currently investigating who is responsible for growing the pot fields in Chester County.

If anyone has information on these marijuana fields or others in the state, please dial SLED’s toll-free hotline: 1-800-POT-LINE (1-800-768-5463).

Callers can remain anonymous.