



San Diego City Attorney Jan I. Goldsmith

NEWS RELEASE

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Five More Marijuana Dispensaries Closed

Pot shops illegally close to Catholic high school are among those shuttered

The City Attorney's Office has closed five more marijuana dispensaries operating in violation of San Diego zoning regulations, including two that also violated state law by operating from property adjacent to the Academy of Our Lady of Peace, a Catholic all-girls high school.

In each case, the dispensary operators and/or property owners were given 24 hours to shut down.

In the past four years, more than 200 unpermitted marijuana dispensaries have been shut down through enforcement action by the City Attorney's Office.

The dispensaries ordered to close in the latest round of restraining orders were:

- **High Grade Collective**, 4535 30th Street in North Park. Defendants were the property owner, Famea, LLC; Jim George Stathis, the CEO and manager of Famea LLC; Victoria Lee Stathis, aka Victoria Lee Pitt, a manager of Famea LLC; and Ranson Michael Shamoun, the incorporator and registered agent for High Grade Collective.
- **Mercury Organics**, 8222 Vickers Street in Kearny Mesa. Defendants were the property owners Behrooz Farhood and Jeannette Marie Farhood as Trustees of the Farhood Family Trust; and Alexandra C. Cilluffo, the lessee and dispensary operator.
- **City Heights Organic**, 4292 University Avenue in City Heights. Defendants were the property owners Orazio De Luca and Elena De Luca, trustees of the Orazio and Elena De Luca Family Trust; Johnny Anthony Casados, chief executive officer of Firefly Organic, the dispensary operator; and Oralena, Inc., of which Orazio De Luca and Elena De Luca are officers, as the lessor of the property to Casados.
- **Botanica Health and Prop 215**, two dispensaries operating from separate suites at 2815 Camino Del Rio South in Mission Valley. Defendants were the property owner 2815 CDRS, LLC, and its CEO and manager Mehrdad Moshtaghi; Kenneth Collado, the CEO of Botanica; and MD Operators, a term sometimes used to describe Botanica and Collado collectively.

Botanica Health and Prop 215, while not easily accessible from the Academy of Our Lady of Peace in University Heights, were within 600 feet of the private high school and so violate state law that prohibits any dispensary from operating within 600 feet of a school.

“As these cases demonstrate, our aggressive enforcement of City zoning regulations is necessary to protect neighborhood standards and safety,” City Attorney Jan Goldsmith said. **“Marijuana dispensaries, like any other business, must obtain proper permits and conform to zoning regulations. There is now a process for legally zoned dispensaries and that process should be followed.”**

Roughly 40 dispensaries were closed in the second half of 2014 by through enforcement action by the City Attorney’s Office, which files civil lawsuits against property owners and dispensary operators who violate City zoning regulations.

Once it obtains court orders to close the dispensaries, the City Attorney’s Office frequently returns to court to seek civil penalties against the operators and property owners.

“We believe there are other dispensaries operating illegally in San Diego beyond those that have been referred to us for prosecution,” Goldsmith said. **“When cases on those other dispensaries are investigated and brought to us by the San Diego Police Department or Code Enforcement Division, we will close them down and obtain monetary sanctions.”**

Complaints regarding marijuana dispensaries may be referred to the Code Enforcement Division of the City at (619) 236-5500.

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