



# KLAMATH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

**Sheriff Chris Kaber**

3300 Vandenberg Rd  
Klamath Falls, OR 97603  
(541) 883-5130  
[sheriff@co.klamath.or.us](mailto:sheriff@co.klamath.or.us)

## **Media Release**

**Date:** August 24, 2022  
**Re:** Letter from Sheriff Chris Kaber  
**Contact:** Brandon Fowler – Public Information Officer  
[bfowler@co.klamath.or.us](mailto:bfowler@co.klamath.or.us)

Klamath County Residents,

Organized Crime; that is what we are up against. The laws of Oregon are specific when they define that term and it includes two or more individuals conspiring to engage in criminal activity as a significant source of income or to aid or abet the violation of criminal laws; to include cannabis production and distribution. Law enforcement agencies in our area are working together to combat this problem and it appears there has been headway. Whether it is the misappropriation of groundwater, the ecological damage of human waste and garbage, the obnoxious odor and unsightly production sites, the human trafficking, the intimidation of law-abiding citizens, or the increased damage to rural roadways, this issue directly affects many in our community.

Last fall, following a record year of marijuana seizures in Klamath County, the Klamath County Sheriff's Office helped bring together every agency and county department involved in combating the illegal manufacture of marijuana. The goal was a unified effort in addressing what had become a severe black-eye to our community in the form of organized criminal activity at a level not seen before in our county. The resulting collaboration has opened up communication and made efforts more efficient. This collaboration resulted in a grant application to the "Illegal Marijuana Market Enforcement Grant Program" administered by the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) of Oregon. In July 2022, Klamath County was granted \$2.67 million in funding to increase the enforcement of laws regarding the illegal production and exportation of marijuana. This funding was specifically requested to boost law enforcement efforts by providing staffing and equipment for the Sheriff's Office, County Code Enforcement, and the District Attorney's Office. In addition, needed funding to aid in clean-up cost associated with the pollution of our lands was secured. This grant funding covers costs that would have been picked up by General Fund tax dollars and increases the amount available to proactively address the problem.



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As the Sheriff of Klamath County, there isn't much I can say about the legalized use of marijuana, however, illegal black-market production is another thing. As you continue to see marijuana production sites being dismantled and destroyed, please keep in mind what the resulting destruction of our county would look like if this was not being undertaken. In neighboring counties, the blight of this illegal crop has taken its toll; and we should not want to end up in the same position. There are of course other law enforcement priorities that we continue to address as well, and this does seem to take us away at times. However, if it is viewed for what it is, organized crime, perhaps the significance of our combined efforts during this short growing season can be better understood. Hopefully our vision of "grow legal or get out" will catch on and this region can get back to what it has done for centuries, use our precious land and water supply to grow food.

Sincerely,

Chris Kaber  
Klamath County Sheriff

**Please Report Illegal Marijuana to: (541) 850-5380 or [mjtipline@klamathcounty.org](mailto:mjtipline@klamathcounty.org)**

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