

The truth about cannabis factories



and your property

This leaflet outlines how owners, landlords and property managers can work with Nottinghamshire Police to tackle drug problems in rental properties and prevent issues for local residents.

Advice on

- Early warning signs
- The tell-tale signs
- The consequences
- Considerations and solutions



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Early warning signs

Criminals involved in drug production often use rental properties to distance themselves from illegal activity. They also use others to 'front' their activity. These people appear to be genuine and respectable, often presenting themselves as having a family, a new job in the local area and looking to rent a property for their own use. After they have taken possession of the property, they disappear without a trace and are replaced by others who convert it for drug cultivation.

Be suspicious if:

- A tenant wishes to pay several months rent in cash, in advance – resist the urge to accept advance rent payments without checking the applicant's references and background.
- The tenant possesses large amounts of cash with no apparent source of income.
- You receive requests to avoid visiting the premises, the explanation may seem plausible and may be combined with a request to meet you elsewhere to pay the rent rather than visiting the address.
- There is a sudden increase in unusual fortification such as dead-bolts or alarms on interior doors.

Consider revisiting your property a few weeks later to ensure the person you rented to is the occupier.



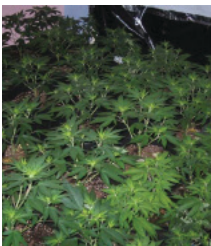
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Tell-tale signs

Some tell-tale signs to look out for include:

- Neighbours may notice that the residents of a property are not living full time at the address, and are only visiting for a short time each day, or visiting every couple of days.
- Electrical wiring that has been tampered with – to tap into the mains supply.
- A sudden jump or fall in electricity bills.
- Powerful lights that are on all day or night – growers use 600 watt lights to speed up plant growth.
- Blacked out windows – the use of black plastic or heavy fabric on windows (usually hidden by blinds or net curtains).
- High humidity in the property – growing operations require a lot of moisture, therefore you may notice signs of significant condensation, peeling paint, mildewed carpet or wallboard.
- Large ducting tubes (similar to a tumble drier outlet) used to take hot air out of the property or bring fresh air in may protrude out of a window.
- Bin bags full of stalks and roots of cannabis plants in the rubbish bin or garden.



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The consequences

Rented properties such as houses, garages, and factory units have all been discovered as sites for illegal drug manufacturing and cannabis growing operations.

Consequences of cannabis grows include:

- Reduction in property values.
- Adverse publicity for the landlord and letting agent.
- Damage and cost of associated repairs and refurbishment.
- Increased property insurance premiums.
- Increased risk of fire and flood due to growing operations.
- Hostile tenants and neighbours.
- Removal from landlord accreditation schemes.
- A criminal record and up to 14 years imprisonment if you knowingly allow the production of cannabis at your premises.
- Seizure of assets and property
- Cost of putting right damage caused by Police executing warrants.
- Increased risk of attracting other criminals to the property.

Neighbours can also be your eyes and ears – ask them to keep a look out on your behalf.

To report crime anonymously, call Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**