



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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City of Riverside Closes Marijuana Dispensary on Busy Central Avenue

Investigation found that marijuana was being sold there in violation of City zoning laws

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – A marijuana dispensary that had been operating illegally on Central Avenue not far from Highway 91 was closed recently after Riverside officials removed the operators and boarded up the building because of multiple fire/life/safety violations.

The Re-Up dispensary at 3532 Central Avenue, between Riverside and San Diego avenues, was found to be operating in violation of City zoning laws. Representatives of the Riverside Police, Fire, and Code Enforcement departments, working with the City Attorney's Office, proceeded with the closure Thursday (2/9).

“The City of Riverside does not permit dispensaries, so this business was operating without a permit and without a business license,” said City Councilman Mike Soubirous, who represents the area. “It’s encouraging to see the City remove a non-permitted business that operated in disregard of zoning laws and other safety requirements.”

Police officers working undercover purchased marijuana at the site to document the property was being used as a dispensary. The business also was found to lack adequate ingress and egress because doors within the business were being controlled by electronic buzzers. That created a possible fire hazard because anyone inside the building could encounter difficulty entering or exiting the building.

The City of Riverside had worked to close the building over several months, starting with the issuance of “cease and desist” letters and later by red-tagging the building to make it illegal to enter and by disconnecting the utilities. City officials later determined that the operators of the dispensary had returned in defiance of the red tag and had brought a generator to provide electricity to the site.

“Riverside has made it clear over the years that marijuana dispensaries are not legal here,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “Riverside residents and business owners cannot be expected to tolerate such establishments, so it’s heartening to see so much hard work yield such a positive result.”