



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### CANNABIS ABATEMENT ACTION ANNOUNCED

Today, Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office personnel assigned to the Cannabis Licensing Office conducted enforcement action at a residence near E. Phillips and Amesti roads in Watsonville, leading to the discovery of an unlicensed cannabis operation and the confiscation of a large quantity of illegal narcotics.

During the past week, Sheriff's Office personnel received information about a cannabis-related electrical bypass at the residence, which caused a utility transformer to overheat and malfunction. Several nearby residents were impacted by the resulting power outage until Pacific Gas & Electric was able to restore power.

Electrical bypasses occur when the electrical meter is bypassed by additional wiring and unregulated/metered power is consumed (stolen) by the occupant of the home. Bypasses are commonly associated with indoor cannabis cultivations due to the high cost of electricity necessary to cultivate cannabis indoors.

During execution of the search warrant, detectives discovered 1122 indoor cannabis plants, 5 firearms – two of which were unlawful assault rifles – \$7,900.00 U.S. Currency, body armor, 1.19 pounds of cocaine, 26 grams of heroin, and 36 grams of fentanyl.

Power to the residence was terminated based on the unsafe and overloaded electrical system.

The case will be referred to the Santa Cruz County District Attorney's Office for prosecution.