

Buyer Beware

MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES OFFER SAFE, TESTED CANNABIS PRODUCTS — AND THE BLACK MARKET DOES NOT.

In an effort to educate California's cannabis consumers, the state Bureau of Cannabis Control has launched a new information campaign called "Get #weedwise." Using a website, social media, billboard ads and downloadable PowerPoint presentations, the BCC wants to alert people about the dangers of buying cannabis products on the black market, and the advantages of buying from licensed dispensaries.

"We're all very excited about how well the campaign kicked off and what the response to it has been thus far," said Alex Traverso, chief of communications at the BCC, who noted the Get #weedwise Twitter account had over 260,000 hits in the first day.

Although it is impossible to accurately estimate, state authorities know that California's illegal cannabis market far exceeds the legal one. By steering consumers away from the black market, the BCC hopes to help sustain legal businesses who pay additional costs to remain compliant and sell legal, tested products.

"What's in your weed shouldn't be a mystery."

Get #weedwise ad
Bureau of Cannabis Control

"What's in your weed shouldn't be a mystery," reads one of the free downloadable advertisements on the Get #weedwise website. And in fact, black-market cannabis is not only untested for potency, it can contain any number of contaminants, like chemicals, molds and fecal matter.

California's licensed dispensaries, on the other hand, offer the safest, most highly scrutinized cannabis products in the world. Tested for pesticides, fungicides, molds and heavy metals, compliant California cannabis comes in child-resistant, tamper-evident packaging too.

The BCC also wants consumers who buy black-market cannabis, and the vendors who sell it, to know their stash is illegal. The Get #weedwise website warns that black-market cannabis can be confiscated by the authorities.

As for illegal vendors, including unlicensed storefronts, delivery services and sesh operators, Get #weedwise alerts them "about the need to be licensed and the consequences of continuing to operate without a license," said Traverso, who admitted that achieving statewide compliance is a daunting challenge. "[But] if



we do this campaign right, we're confident that we can continue to chip away at the problem."

Get #weedwise joins the Greenout Movement, a group of legal California cannabis businesses who launched their own similar campaign, #ShopLegalShops, to convince consumers to buy from legal stores.

To verify the legal status of a particular cannabis business, use the search engine on Get #weedwise at www.Capotcheck.com.



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