



County of Calaveras

Department of Planning

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A great deal of controversy has arisen with the decision by the Calaveras Enterprise to publish the location of cannabis cultivation registration sites in the county. The Enterprise and many others submitted Public Records Act requests to review the files shortly after the close of the initial filing deadline of June 30th. Due to sensitive medical and personal identification information in the files, we refused access to the files, but the County has a legal responsibility to provide public records. We informed the requestors that once a database containing the information was developed, redacting medical and other sensitive information, we would provide that to them in-lieu of releasing the files for review.

In order to minimize numerous future requests for similar data, which would have overwhelmed staff and created additional costs to the taxpayers, County staff decided to post the database on the Planning Department website. No information posted as a part of the data base is confidential and no medical privacy data which was not public record has been posted.

In my opinion, it was unnecessary and irresponsible for the Enterprise to publish the link to the data, but that was their decision to do so. They had the right to the information and the County had the legal obligation to provide it. While it raises some concerns regarding safety of growers and identification of the cultivation site as targets for robbery, cultivators are responsible for their security and were aware of that responsibility at the application stage. There are already several existing sources on the internet where potential thieves can easily identify cultivation sites in the county. It is the illegal cultivation sites that are now most at risk of theft. An informed neighbor is likely to be a friend rather than a foe of a lawful cultivator.

The cannabis industry is transitioning from an underground, basically hidden, activity to one that is out in the open, and subject to all of the rules and regulations that other business and enterprises face. This includes regulation, taxation, and public scrutiny.

The Planning Department takes its responsibility for transparent government while protecting the public safety seriously. The registration process developed by the County brings cannabis cultivation out of the woods and into the public spectrum. I believe the general public health and safety benefit from such transparency.

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Calaveras County