

ARE YOUR TENANTS GROWING POT?



Recently, a California landlord was hit with a surprise electric bill for \$140,000. Apparently, a tenant of the landlord had bypassed the electrical meter and was stealing electricity. While the rental agreement specifically stated that the tenant was responsible for the electrical bill, the landlord's name was noted on the account. The landlord was able to settle the bill for a lower amount, but not before having to file a lawsuit against the utility company and living for a few weeks without power to his own home.

What in the world was the tenant doing to use so much electricity? Growing pot of course! Proper tenant screening and rental inspections are good protections against keeping marijuana growers out of your properties.

The following are indications of potential drug plant cultivation and or drug activity:

- Notices of large utility bills or heavy usage;
- Modified water or electrical systems;
- Blacked out windows in homes;
- Light glowing through shades or skylights all night;
- Hoses running out of a home;
- Unusual or new ventilation systems / new persistent humming noises;

- A skunk like smell that persists during the daylight hours and doesn't dissipate quickly in fresh air
- Tenants resistant to inspections;
- Traffic at all hours with short visits.
- A pair of tennis shoes hanging over a power line at or near the drug dealer's home; and



If you suspect potential illegal activity in one of your communities, call the police and let them handle it...don't be a hero. You don't want to be accused of tampering with evidence or worse, being a partner in the operation. Police reports on such activities will be great evidence in the eviction hearing.

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