



NEWS



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- Honey oil lab incident leads to explosion, injuries

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Anthony Victoria, Inland Empire Community News

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Several people were injured last Wednesday in a butane honey oil lab explosion near North Coro Drive in Colton.

At least five explosions occurred in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties in 2016, according to law enforcement reports.

On January 4, police and firefighters responded to a call at the home around 4:30 p.m. after receiving a call about an explosion, according to a press release from the Colton Police Department.

Corporal Ray Mendez said that the explosion came from a butane honey oil lab in the garage. Several people were injured in the incident, though it is unclear at press time if there any suspects in custody.

Colton Police and **San Bernardino County Fire Department** investigators are still looking into the explosion.

“We have reason to believe they were extracting oil from marijuana plants,” Mendez said. “The process of extraction is dangerous and flammable.”

Honey oil is also referred to as “hash oil” or “wax” by cannabis users. It’s created when someone uses butane to extract THC from marijuana plants.

Mendez confirmed that accidents are commonplace when dealing with oil extraction; he said people can suffer serious burns if the process backfires. Explosions and fire can harm innocent people who live in apartments or homes near oil labs, Mendez said.

Lawmakers have taken steps to reduce explosions and fires related to honey oil labs. Assembly Bill 2679, scheduled to take effect in 2018, will require extractors to apply for professional licenses and mandate strict protocol for operating labs.

Councilman David Toro, who represents the area where the incident took place, said the incident has motivated him to become more educated about marijuana products to determine whether legalization is a good or bad thing.

“I think we need to learn more,” Toro said. “As we start dealing with this, we’ll know how to make decisions according to the issue.”

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