

# So You're Thinking About Getting High?

## { Beginner's Guide to Pot }

BY HEIDI GROOVER

### WHAT IS HAPPENING?

After voters approved Initiative 502 in 2012, possessing an ounce of cannabis became legal for adults 21 and older in Washington. Since then, it's been a complicated and wonky process of making rules for how pot would be grown and sold in the state. The Washington State Liquor Control Board, which was tasked with making the rules, started licensing growers in March, and now they've finally licensed 24 retail stores to sell that pot, with more to come. (One opened in Spokane Tuesday.) Yes, Colorado did this more than six months ago. There, a well-regulated medical marijuana market was in place and recreational pot was basically folded in, with locations selling both. Here in Washington, medical marijuana is legal but largely unregulated, which made state rule-makers wary of using that industry as a basis for this new one.

### WHAT'S LEGAL AND WHAT'S NOT?

If you're under 21, sorry. No recreational cannabis for you. If you're 21 or older, you can now enter a state-licensed pot store (find one near you on page 27), show your ID and buy up to an ounce of bud (more later about limits on other forms of marijuana). Edibles also are legal, but there won't be any in stores for a while, since the Liquor Control Board has yet to license anyone making them.

Important things to remember: No public consumption (you could get a \$50 ticket); no sharing with minors (that's still a felony and the authorities are taking it very seriously); if it's in your car, keep the packaging closed; don't drive high (still illegal). Be careful on the feds' turf. No rolling a joint in a national park or sending your favorite pot brownies through the mail. In Washington state parks, you can light up in your own RV or tent, but not in view of others or in a state-owned cabin or yurt.

### WHAT IF I LIVE IN IDAHO?

Don't take your weed back across the border. It's illegal there and that's unlikely to change in the near future. Idaho State Police officers already have been accused of "license plate profiling" drivers from Washington and Colorado.

### CAN I GET FIRED FOR SMOKING POT?

Short answer: Yes. Despite the drug's new status, employers are still free to enforce weed-free workplaces.

...continued on next page



6.9 million

9.91 percent

Initiative 502: changing state drug laws and adding new ones for the regulation of marijuana businesses

55.7 percent

"As far as total decriminalization, I'm not there yet at this moment. I'm a parent and I'm just not comfortable right now." — Then-candidate Jay Inslee, press conference, June 2011

Just over 20 months

\$51 million in 2015-17, then \$140 million in 2017-19

Not allowed recreationally

334 will be allowed

Anyone over 21 can buy one ounce of bud (other limits for edibles and concentrates)

On private property where you know the owner is OK with it; nowhere "in view of the general public"



POPULATION

ADULT POT USERS (PERCENT 18 AND OLDER WHO SAY THEY USED POT IN LAST MONTH)

BALLOT MEASURE

PERCENT WHO VOTED FOR

GOVERNOR'S POSITION BEFORE LEGALIZATION

FROM VOTE TO STORES

PROJECTED TAX REVENUE

HOME GROWS

STORES

PURCHASING

CONSUMING



5.2 million

11.01 percent

Amendment 64: an amendment to the state constitution

55.3 percent

"Colorado is known for many great things — marijuana should not be one of them." — Gov. John Hickenlooper, statement, September, 2012

Just under 14 months

\$98 million in the first year (up from earlier estimates of \$60-70 million); allocated for education, substance abuse prevention and treatment

Six recreational plants allowed per person in enclosed, locked space; no selling

144 open so far; more applying now

Colorado residents can buy up to an ounce; out-of-staters get a quarter of an ounce

Ditto: "No consumption that is committed openly and publically," though some special events and private clubs have been able to get around the rule.

# Beginner's Guide to Pot

## HOW DO I GET HIGH?

People are doing all sorts of stuff you probably didn't do back in your college days. The basics are here, and there's some useful advice on page 30.

**Smoking:** You can buy pre-rolled joints or, of course, roll them yourself. You won't find things like spliffs, which include tobacco, since stores are only allowed to sell marijuana products.

**Dabbing:** This technique has rapidly gained popularity and made headlines for how dangerous it can be. To do it, you need butane hash oil to smoke. The oil is made by filtering butane through marijuana and then heating the resulting product to remove the butane, a process that can cause actual explosions and leave butane residue in the oil. But when done right, it leaves you with basically pure THC that will get you super-high. (The safer and state-approved way of doing this is with a "closed system," which keeps the flammable butane from escaping into the air near the flame, where it can ignite.)

**Vaping:** Vaporizers and vape pens, which are like e-cigarettes, use a heating element to vaporize the pot and can be more discreet than smoking.

**Edibles:** Pretty much anything can come cannabis-infused. Most common: brownies, cookies, candy, that sort of thing. Tinctures are liquid marijuana extractions taken in drops under the tongue.

## HOW ARE EDIBLES DIFFERENT FROM JOINTS?

Even some of the most experienced stoners can tell horror stories about their time with pot brownies/gummy bears/banana bread. That's because edibles produce a different kind of high and are easier to overconsume. Not only can edibles take longer (up to two hours!) to kick in, but the recommended amount of a pot-infused candy bar to eat might be just an eighth or a tenth of the whole thing. When in life do we easily practice such self-control? Be smart: Start with a little and be patient.

## HOW MUCH CAN I BUY AND WHAT WILL IT COST?

Due to pot shortages, stores may impose their own temporary limits, but legally speaking, during each purchase, you can buy up to the legal possession limit: one ounce of usable marijuana, seven grams of marijuana-infused extract for inhalation, 16 ounces of marijuana-infused solid product or 72 ounces of marijuana-infused product in liquid form. Stores are not required to track how many purchases you make, but if you're caught with more than the legal limit, you're breaking the law.

The one-ounce limit may seem strict, but actually it's probably plenty. Nonprofit researchers working for the state Liquor Control Board found that a typical joint contains a half-gram or less of marijuana. It takes a little more than 28 grams to make an ounce, so that one-ounce limit should get you around 56 joints.

Costs will vary between retailers, and they're likely to go down over time as more pot becomes available and the novelty wears off. Prices across the state Tuesday ranged from \$13-25 a gram, including tax.

## WHAT'S ALL THIS ON THE LABEL?

On labels, you'll find the name of the product or strain and its "potency profile," explaining how much THC — the stuff that gets you high — is in the product. You'll also see the product's weight, its harvest date and warnings about its intoxicating effects. Edibles will have recommended serving sizes (the state defines one serving as 10 milligrams of active THC). The results of required lab testing, which also checks for things like moisture content and bacteria, won't be on the label, but the retailer is required to give you those if you ask.

## IS THERE POT ETIQUETTE?

When you go shopping, have a basic idea of what you want. It's OK to ask for advice, but like most shopping, it's better if you know enough to ask informed questions. As a guest, find out how your host feels about it, not just for legal purposes, but also because it's better to know who's OK with it before you light up in someone else's house. And like fine wine or chocolates, plan to share if you bring it to a gathering. If you're the host, remember those choosing not to partake may feel awkward as others pass the bong, so do your best to make everyone comfortable without making the smokers feel unwanted. Consider having a specified smoking area. And remember, that smell carries, so if you're in an apartment building or your backyard, keep in mind that you're not the only one taking in the aroma.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEDICAL AND RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA?

Yes, pot has been sort of legal here for more than a decade, and you or someone you know may already have a hookup. But that market is for medical users, and there are plenty of people out there who need marijuana as medicine, which is why trying to fold the two industries together has been so controversial. For now, Washington's medical marijuana collective gardens will live on in the legal gray areas where they exist, as the more regulated and stiffly taxed recreational market grows alongside them.

## WHO SHOULD AVOID POT?

Kids. Without a doctor's recommendation for medical marijuana, it's illegal for anyone under 21 to possess pot in Washington, and some researchers say it can interfere with brain development. Some, like the National Alliance on Mental Illness, also warn against the use of marijuana by anyone with risk of or a diagnosed mental illness because it can worsen symptoms of conditions like depression and anxiety. ■



The inaugural customers at Spokane Green Leaf, the first retail shop to open in the area. *YOUNG KWAK*



# OPENING DAY

After the state licensed two dozen marijuana retailers Monday, a handful of stores opened across Washington Tuesday, officially launching the nation's second-ever legal recreational marijuana market. While three stores have been licensed in Spokane, only Spokane Green Leaf on North Country Homes Boulevard, just off Division, was ready to open Tuesday. About 200 people lined up around the corner of the otherwise

nondescript strip mall for the chance to buy a piece of history. "Legal weed!" shouted the first group of customers allowed to enter the store, cheering after the first purchase was made. The other two stores expect to open in coming weeks, and the Liquor Control Board will continue issuing more retail licenses throughout the summer.

— HEIDI GROOVER



## LICENSED AND LEGAL

Three Spokane County stores received their licenses this week

► **SPokane Green Leaf**, 9107 N. Country Homes Blvd. Hours: Monday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm, Sunday 11 am-7 pm

► **Satori**, 9301 N. Division St. opening soon

► **Green Star Cannabis**, 1403 N. Division St. opening soon

Start your Summer **RAVENTURE** at Larry H. Miller Downtown Toyota

LEASE A NEW 2014 RAV4 LE AWD \$143 PER MONTH 24 MONTHS Over 50 to choose from! After \$500 Rebate Plus Tax, License, Title, Reg. Fee

PURCHASE A NEW 2014 RAV4 LE AWD MSRP \$26,590 Your Price \$23,443 After \$500 Rebate Plus Tax, License, Title, Reg. Fee

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Rebates provided by Toyota. 36 Month lease. 34K miles per year. \$1,999.00 Down. No security deposit required. Plus tax, title and negotiable. \$150 dealer doc fee. On approved credit. All offers on contract through Toyota Financial Services. Not eligible for double and triple down incentives. All advertised vehicles are after all factory incentives. All offers and incentives cannot be combined with any other vehicles or offers. Offer ends 7/31/14.

Grower

Processor

Seller



DEANNA PAN PHOTO

## BLESS MY WEED

Frank Schade thinks he's hit the gold rush

BY DEANNA PAN

Frank Schade guesses he gets about 10 calls a day from people itching to get their hands on his weed. It's good stuff, after all — organically grown with high THC levels. Some of his plants are 8 feet tall and weigh 3 pounds, with dense and fuzzy buds, ready to be trimmed, cured, tested and packaged for sale. And boy, are sales going to be good.

Schade is the "Green Surfer" — an homage to his favorite comic book character, the Silver Surfer. At his 1,400-square-foot, climate-controlled warehouse en route to Mount Spokane, he blasts Deftones on his stereo and keeps his gate locked. In his tool belt, Schade carries a pH meter, a pair of scissors, three different screwdrivers and a loaded pistol. His facility is outfitted with 32 security cameras — more than double the state liquor board requirement. He's got a hot commodity to protect: a dozen strains of some 130 marijuana plants blooming beneath high-powered lamps.

Schade, who received his grower's

license in April, started growing pot 15 years ago after Washington legalized medical marijuana. His mother has cervical dystonia, a rare and painful neurological disorder that makes the muscles in her neck contract and her head shake.

"Other than her botox injections in her neck to kill the nerves," he says, "marijuana is the only thing that helps."

Schade's also a businessman. He owns a recruiting company, where business falls and rises with the state of the economy. So he did the math: If he grew 10 to 20 pounds of product a month, he could easily clear a quarter of million dollars in his first year, selling at \$3 a gram.

But the market's better than he originally expected. As Washington pot retailers brace for statewide marijuana shortages, Schade suspects he's going to cash in big.

"I'm here for the gold rush," he says. "If I don't make a million dollars my first year, I have screwed up." ■



## AT YIELD FARMS

In an industrial zone along Trent Avenue, Wesley Tuttle (pictured) spends 11 hours a day planting, cloning, watering, trimming, harvesting, drying and curing marijuana at Yield Farms. His wife and co-owner Johanna comes in after her day job to manage the financials and state-required tracking process, even scanning barcodes on plants when they are moved around the farm.

After receiving their state recreational grow license in May, the Tuttlés converted their medical marijuana grow business to a recreational grow. Wesley says that he wants to prove that marijuana can be a productive part of the economy: "It's more the accomplishment of Americans, that we're honest enough, hard-working enough, and that this can be done in a way that's responsible and doesn't hurt kids or society."

— YOUNG KWAK



JACOB JONES PHOTO

## GREEN DREAMS

An accountant embraces risk and launches a marijuana boutique in West Spokane

BY JACOB JONES

Pink tape marks off a small rectangle of dirt adjacent to Carol Ehrhart's home near the top of Sunset Hill in West Spokane. As Ehrhart paces around the tape, she describes her plans for the Four Twenty Friendly marijuana boutique, now nearing its expected opening in mid-August.

Ehrhart, 43, a longtime accountant, envisions a 560-square-foot shop specializing in marijuana-infused edibles and select strains of marijuana. Ehrhart and her fiancée, Alissa Taylor, so far are the only applicants on the west side of Spokane to win a top spot in state's license lottery.

"We have a lot of hotels and stuff around here," Ehrhart says, "so we figure we'll get more of the tourists, or more of the discreet users who don't want to be seen walking into a place on Division."

A year ago, Ehrhart never dreamed she would be launching her own marijuana business. But opportunity moves rapidly, and Ehrhart says she saw the

chance to get in on the "ground level" of a popular new market. She has charged head-on into the challenge, navigating the complicated approval process and relearning a culture that has evolved since her high school days.

"It's a risk," she says. "Starting any business is a huge risk. ... We are in uncharted territory."

Ehrhart realized that — with some major security enhancements — the commercially zoned property her home rests on would serve as the best location for now. She has since worked to sort out inspections and permits for the small shop. She admits it has proven a trying process, but remains excited as opening day draws near.

"It's been pins and needles for, gosh, it's been seven months now," she says. "[But] once the permitting process is completed, it should go pretty quick."

Dreams aren't easy. They take patience. They're fickle and hard-fought.

"Right now, it's pink tape," she says. "That's what we got." ■



Washington licensed its first legal pot producers in March, allowing them to acquire seeds and plants with no questions asked. Once they get plants, growers must enter them into a state-approved traceability system, which assigns each plant a unique barcode and tracks it through growth, processing and sale.



Marijuana plants take varying amounts of time to mature, depending on strains and other variables, but need at least a few months before they can be harvested and dried.



Processors (who are sometimes also growers) package bud for sale at stores or turn it into edibles, concentrates or other products.



State rules require growers and processors to have samples of their products tested by certified labs before sending anything to stores.



Growers and processors cannot also sell pot directly to customers, so they sell their products to retail stores. The tracking software makes it possible to connect any given batch of edibles or extracts to the plants they came from.