



**7/18/25 Update:** *After additional consultation with experts at the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) - they have advised us that the Chinese labeled pesticide materials we believed to be "Carbofuran" as initially reported, are more than likely dangerous fumigant products that contain a mixture of highly toxic insecticides (i.e., organophosphates, carbamates, and pyrethroids), fungicides, and herbicides, many of which have no approved use in the United States. We will continue to work closely with our state partners at Department of Fish and Wildlife and CalEPA to ensure these toxic illegal operations are held accountable for these serious violations in our county.*

**7/9/25 Original Media Release:**

**Joint Agency Operation: Nevada County Sheriff's Office and California Department of Fish and Wildlife Partner for Illegal Cannabis Enforcement**

Nevada City – For several years, members of the Nevada County Sheriff's Office (NCSO) Special Investigation Unit (SIU) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) have intermittently worked together to address and eradicate illegal cannabis operations in Nevada County while still conducting independent investigations. To strengthen their effectiveness, NCSO and CDFW have merged resources and personnel to form a joint agency operation for illegal cannabis enforcement to increase overall efficiency, reduce overhead costs, and increase the number of suspected illegal cannabis farms that can be targeted and eradicated. The joint agency operation prioritizes illegal cultivation sites that are suspected of polluting California waterways/watersheds, along with illegal dumping and water runoff.

"The Sheriff's Office and CDFW have always worked well together on cases and have shared staffing and resources as available. By working together more often, we can reduce redundancy and execute more warrants than we would otherwise be able," said Lt. Mike Vingom, who oversees the NCSO SIU.

"By combining our resources, we're not just dismantling illegal cultivation sites – we're protecting California's natural resources and communities in a more efficient and focused way, which in turn will support the legal cannabis industry," explained CDWF Assistant Chief Frank Imbrie.

In June, NCSO SIU and CDFW served eight search warrants over two days, June 18-19, at properties throughout Nevada County, eradicating 12,342 plants and 1,329.3 lbs. of processed cannabis. Two pistols, along with four upper receivers and two lower receivers that can be assembled into additional firearms were confiscated at one private property in the 13000 block of Turkey Point Cir. in Penn Valley on June 19. Additionally, at one property on the 15000 block of Siskiyou Ct. in Grass Valley, Chinese-labeled Carbofuran was located on the property on June 19. Carbofuran is an extremely hazardous pesticide banned in the United States due to its toxicity to humans and the environment. In severe cases, it can lead to convulsions, coma, pulmonary edema, muscle paralysis, and death by asphyxiation, according to the National Library of Medicine<sup>1</sup>.

In total, six individuals were cited, and three individuals were arrested and booked into Wayne Brown Correctional Facility. Charges varied by each offender but included 11358(c) - illegal cannabis

cultivation; 11358(d)(3)(B) - illegal cannabis cultivation while also violating section 13260 of the Water Code; 11358(d)(3)(C) - illegal cannabis cultivation while also violating section 5620 or 5652 of the Fish and Game Code; 11358(d)(3)(D) - illegal cannabis cultivation while also violating section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code; 182(A)(1) – conspiracy to commit crime; 11359 - possession of cannabis for sale; 12996(b) – intentional or negligent hazard to human health or the environment; and 11366.5(A) – renting/using space for manufacturing, storing, or distributing any controlled substance.

Partners who assisted NCSO SIU and CDFW with the execution of June search warrants and/or the investigations included the Nevada County District Attorney's Office, Nevada County Cannabis Compliance (a division of Nevada County Code Compliance), California Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Tax Franchise Board, Trident Task Force, the National Guard, and the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration.

Additional search warrants will be executed throughout the summer and fall months. Community members who suspect illegal grow activity are encouraged to call NCSO, CDFW or Nevada County Cannabis Compliance. Tips may also be submitted anonymously at <https://www.nevadacountyca.gov/192/Sheriffs-Crime-Tip-Form>

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<sup>1</sup>[National Library of Medicine: Compound Summary Carbofuran](#)