



Consumer Watch

A Monthly Newsletter from the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection

William M. Rubenstein, Commissioner

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor

www.ct.gov/dcp

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Suggested Links

www.ct.gov/dcp

Our website offers the latest and most comprehensive information that we have on dozens of consumer-related topics!

www.SmartConsumer.ct.gov

Basic information for consumers of all ages to protect themselves and avoid scams!

<https://www.elicense.ct.gov>

To verify a license, permit or registration, or to run a roster of licensees. Also, the place for online renewal!

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Four Growers Chosen to Produce Medical Marijuana for Connecticut

An empty warehouse on a quiet street in the city of West Haven will soon become a hive of activity as construction workers convert the space to one of four State-licensed medical marijuana production facilities. Following completion of a competitive application process that yielded more than a dozen detailed and comprehensive applications in November, Commissioner Rubenstein and his evaluation team reached their conclusions as to the four that most closely satisfied the evaluation criteria.

On the brutally cold morning of January 28th, the Commissioner was joined by Governor Malloy, Lt. Governor Wyman, Mayor O'Brien of West Haven and other officials in announcing the names of the four successful candidates. Nearly 100 members of the press, local residents, applicants and other interested stakeholders gathered in the open space to learn the outcome.

"Connecticut's is the first state medical marijuana program based squarely on the pharmaceutical/medical model -- from physician certification, to production facilities operating as pharmaceutical manufacturers, to dispensing to patients by licensed pharmacists," Commissioner Rubenstein began.



Commissioner William M. Rubenstein announces the four producer licensees at a press conference on January 28th 2014. Behind him at podium are Governor Dannel P. Malloy (rear, left) and Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman (rear, right).

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From Commissioner Rubenstein

There is a great deal to be optimistic and excited about during these bleary winter weeks. Thirty-three years after it was first proposed in the legislature, the possibility of medical marijuana being available to ease the suffering of our sickest patients is becoming a reality. As this issue reports, the first Connecticut-produced medical marijuana will be available to patients later this summer. The newly-named producers have pledged not only to grow and manufacturer high quality products for Connecticut patients, but also plan to give back to their employees and communities, as described on page 2. There's another Small Claims Workshop in a few weeks; that's also noted on page 2. With Consumer Protection Week running in early March, we want you to know about the contest we have planned; we hope it catches the attention and imagination of our younger consumers. Read all about it on page 3. Speaking of reading, page 4 describes a brief report that we just completed at the request of the General Assembly on the state of the e-book industry and its relationship to libraries in Connecticut. Have a look; it's worth knowing about. Best wishes,

Bill Rubenstein



Commissioner William M. Rubenstein

Medical Marijuana Growers, *continued from page 1*

"We have selected four producers who embrace that clear vision and who will create state-of-the-art production facilities capable of assuring that pharmaceutical-grade marijuana in a variety of dosage forms is available to seriously ill patients whose doctors believe that this medicine is appropriate for them," the Commissioner said.

The four successful producer applicants are:

- **Advanced Grow Labs, LLC – 400 Frontage Rd., West Haven**
- **Connecticut Pharmaceutical Solutions, LLC -- 47 Main St., Portland**
- **Curaleaf, LLC -- 100 Grist Mill Rd., Simsbury**
- **Theraplant, LLC – 856 Echo Lake Rd., Watertown**

Advanced Grow Labs building, West Haven

Governor Malloy was upbeat in his comments, simultaneously expressing his firm conviction in the need for Connecticut's medical marijuana program.



"We are carefully implementing this program with a number of safeguards in place to ensure that we avoid some of the problems encountered in other states," Malloy said. "But let's be clear, patients in these circumstances deserve our compassion and understanding, not arrest and criminal records," the Governor said.



Curaleaf, LLC building, Simsbury

All producers must be operational within 180 days of licensure (summer 2014).

Selection of the growers is a major step in the implementation of Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 420f, which provides for the palliative use of marijuana for patients suffering from one of 11 specific debilitating illnesses, whose doctors believe that such treatment is appropriate.

Since passage of the landmark legislation in 2012, the Department has busily put pieces of the program into place. October 2012 saw implementation of an online patient, physician and caregiver registration system, and in the summer of 2013, the agency sought and acquired passage of detailed regulations to further implement program operation. This past September, the Department launched the competitive selection process for the state's medical marijuana production and dispensing system by putting out RFAs, "requests for applications." Responses were due November 15th. Sixteen were submitted.

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Producers Plan to Add Value to Benefit Local Communities

Each of the four successful medical marijuana producer applicants earned bonus points in their application by including community benefits plans, which described their intentions to give back to the local and/or state community if awarded a license.

The ideas were creative and ranged from establishing structured opportunities for employees to volunteer in their communities as part of their jobs, donating a percentage of sales to programs benefiting the local community, matching employee contributions of up to \$500 per employee per year to charitable and youth organizations in which an employee is actively involved; and establishing a number of positions within a facility specifically for persons with a disability.

Facilities also expressed intentions to employ the use of solar energy where possible to reduce their energy consumption and to promote environmentally friendly commuting alternatives for employees.

You're Invited: Free "Small Claims Court" Workshop on February 18th

Get a free introduction and learn how to file a case and represent yourself in Small Claims Court! UCONN Law School students are prepared and well-informed about the many laws affecting consumers and are offering this program for the public benefit.

After attending this workshop, you will be more empowered to navigate the small claims process. The workshop is scheduled for:

6:00 to 7:00 pm

Tuesday, February 18

Reading Room in William F. Starr Hall

UCONN Law School

45 Elizabeth Street, Hartford

Visit [this link](#) or email Andrew.glass@uconn.edu for more information.

Consumer Protection Week to Feature “SmartConsumer Contest” for Kids

Just about everyone uses and enjoys some kind of electronic technology, but for those between the ages of 12 to 18, it's woven into their very life – always has been and always will be! Today's youth use technology to find, rate, and instantly compare the goods and services that interest them.

What better way to celebrate Consumer Protection Week than by encouraging young people to be smarter consumers?

Our upcoming contest for 12 to 18 year olds will help participants learn more about making informed choices. To answer the brief quiz correctly, contestants will have to read through our SmartConsumer.com website to find the answers. The essay portion of the contest asks them to think about how to apply some of what they have just learned in their everyday life and write a 500-word essay about it.

FIRST prize: Apple I-Pad Mini (32 GB)

SECOND prize: Apple I-Pod Touch (32GB)

THIRD prize: Kindle Fire (16 GB)

- **WHAT:** “SmartConsumer Contest”
- **WHEN:** March 2nd - 8th 2014
- **WHERE:** Enter online or by mail. (All information and rules will be at www.smartconsumer.ct.gov by March 1)
- **WHY:** To recognize Consumer Protection Week, educate young people, award prizes
- **WHO:** Legal Connecticut residents ages 12 through 18

Please share this contest news with a young person in your life. Help them to become a smarter consumer and encourage them to participate in the quiz and essay contest between March 2 and March 8. They could win a **super prize** and learn how to avoid being ripped off.

True or False?

When Connecticut's medical marijuana delivery system is fully operational, growers will transport marijuana in secure containers to dispensary facilities for processing and packaging, and the dispensary facilities will display the items, including large clear glass jars of medical marijuana, for customers to see.

True or False?

Answer page 4

- Watch our website for contest rules in mid-February – www.smartconsumer.ct.gov.
- Listen for our radio ads on **HOT93.7 FM** starting March 1.
- Check out the following websites between March 2 and March 8 – **WTIC-1080 AM, WTIC-FM, WZMX** or **WRCH**. Our “SmartConsumer Contest” info and rules will be there, too!

Good luck!

Department Completes Report on the Availability of Electronic Books to Public Library Patrons

With more people using e-readers to access books, are book publishers and distributors giving public libraries a fair deal on pricing so that libraries can offer a sizable and desirable selection of books at no cost to the reading public using this technology?

This in one of the questions that the Department of Consumer Protection was tasked with exploring under Special Act 13-10, which required the agency to conduct a study "regarding the availability of electronic books to users of public libraries in this state," including "(1) a survey of whether and how book publishers and third-party electronic book distributors sell, license or otherwise make electronic books available to users of public libraries in this state, (2) what problems, if any, exist with current practices regarding the availability of electronic books to users of public libraries in this state, and (3) recommendations to increase the availability of electronic books to users of public libraries in this state." Upon completion of its review, the Department was directed to complete a report with recommendations and present it to the General Assembly by February 1, 2014.

The result is an interesting and informed report that details how e-book transactions differ from traditional book sales, and how these variations are affected in distinct ways under copyright law, underpinning the current tension between book publishers and public libraries.

The report presents and analyzes three options for increasing e-book availability at public libraries and the benefits and costs of each, including:

- creating a state-wide e-book distribution platform that would enable the State's libraries to expand and better manage their e-content collections and enhance their negotiating position when dealing with publishers or other owners of e-content;
- enhancing financial resources available to libraries in order to enable them to buy more e-books; and
- taking a "wait and see" approach as current trends suggest greater e-book availability at libraries may occur without government intervention.

The Department concludes that further legislation mandating e-book access or specific terms are not currently warranted, due to concerns of federal preemption and a desire to avoid interfering with a market still in flux.

For anyone interested in reading the [report](#), it is available at www.ct.gov/dcp, under "Publications."

Medical Marijuana Producers, *continued*



Planned Theraplant building, Watertown

This new milestone was reached only after a detailed and thorough review of the 16 applications, each upwards of 1,000 pages, detailing myriad aspects of applicants' visions and plans for their operations. All applications were scored on their security system and plans; business experience, financial stability, funding sources and potential legal liabilities; facility location and compatibility with other structures in the immediate neighborhood; range of marijuana products to be offered; current and potential future capacity; employee training and educational opportunities; proposed marketing plan; appropriateness of credentials, competence, and past legal and regulatory compliance. For bonus points, applications could also include plans to enhance the working environment of employees, provide a compassionate need program, engage in or fund scientific research, give back to the community, prevent substance abuse and operate in environmentally beneficial ways.

With the producers chosen, the Department will focus its efforts on the competitive selection process for between three and five dispensary facility licenses. Twenty-six applications were filed by the November deadline; license awards are expected to be announced by early April 2014.



Connecticut Pharmaceutical Solutions, Portland

True or False? *answer*

The answer is False. As the regulations stipulate (Sec. 21a-408-56) packaging and labeling is to be done by the producer. Not only will producers document the chain of custody of all marijuana, store all marijuana securely and allow access to only the minimum number of specifically authorized employees, they will keep detailed records of all brand names, types and quantities they produce, the products they make, and to whom it was sold. Allowable marijuana products are: raw marijuana, cigarettes, extracts, sprays, tinctures, oils, topical applications, transdermal patches, baked goods; capsules; pills. Producers are responsible for individually packaging, labeling and sealing marijuana products in unit sizes such that no single unit contains more than a one-month supply (2.5 oz.) of marijuana. Smaller size packaged units, such as 1/8 oz., 1/2 oz. and 1/4 oz. will also be allowed. Packages must be child-resistant and light-resistant. Products must be labeled – in English -- before being sold to the dispensary, and must include the name and address of the producer and the brand name of the product, which must be registered and on file with the Department prior to its sale. Labels must also include a unique serial number that will match the product with a producer batch, and among other details, a terpenes profile and a list of all active ingredients, including percentages of THC, CBD and THCA.