

Plea reached in butane explosion

Eric L. Scully, 35, of Cottage Grove, Oregon, pleaded guilty today to endangering human life and illegally possessing and manufacturing marijuana after a November 2017 butane honey oil (BHO) explosion in Cottage Grove.

"Manufacturing hash oil is extremely dangerous and poses a grave risk of injury or death to producers and unknowing, innocent victims. Federal authorities will continue targeting BHO producers and the illicit distribution networks providing them with butane gas. Together with our local partners, we will put an end to this severe public safety threat," said Billy J. Williams, U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

"This investigation highlights the significant dangers that these extraction operations pose," stated Keith Weis, DEA Special Agent in Charge of the Pacific Northwest Region. He further added, "This explosive event in Cottage Grove's community was caused by highly reckless criminal activities surrounding butane honey oil (BHO) production, this time we were very lucky that lives were not lost."

According to court documents, on November 16, 2017, the Cottage Grove Police and Fire Departments responded to an explosion at a storage facility in Cottage Grove. Officers found Scully at a local hospital where he was being treated for serious burn injuries.

Investigators later learned that, at the time of the explosion, at least three other individuals were inside the



COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL FILE PHOTO

First responders arrive on scene after the BHO explosion on Nov. 16, 2017.

facility.

Two days later, Cottage Grove Police and U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents executed a search warrant at the storage facility. Inside, they found a large, sophisticated, and unlicensed BHO extraction lab. BHO is a concentrated form of marijuana extracted using highly flammable or combustible solvents.

During the search, agents found more than 1,900 pounds of marijuana bud and shake, 728 marijuana plants and over 80 pounds of marijuana extract. Each plant was either mature or had leaves and readily observable root formation.

The investigation determined that while manufacturing BHO, one of Scully's

machines, located in a room containing combustibles, caught fire.

The machine and combustibles exploded, injuring Scully and placing the other individuals present at substantial risk of harm.

Scully faces up to 40 years in prison with a five-year mandatory minimum sentence, a \$5 million fine and a mandatory four-year term of supervised release. The U.S. Attorney's Office and defense counsel are jointly recommending a non-binding, 87-month sentence for Scully who will be sentenced on Feb. 21, 2019, before U.S. District Court Judge Michael J. McShane.

As part of the plea agreement, Scully agrees to pay restitution to each victim as

determined by the court, including payments for property damage, physical injuries caused by the explosion and the reimbursement of insurance companies. Scully also agreed to forfeit \$25,980 in criminal proceeds and a pickup truck and trailer used to facilitate his crimes.

This case was investigated by DEA and the Cottage Grove Police Department. It is being prosecuted by Gavin W. Bruce, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

American Legion to host holiday bazaar

A Holiday Bazaar will be held Saturday, Dec 8, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the American Legion Hall, 826 W. Main St. in Cottage Grove.

An eclectic assortment of new, used, holiday and one-of-a-kind items will be for sale.

All proceeds will stay in this community and help to fund the nonprofit organizations of Soup's On, which provides

free community Sunday dinners, and Tucker's Cupboard,

providing financial aid for K9 medical needs.



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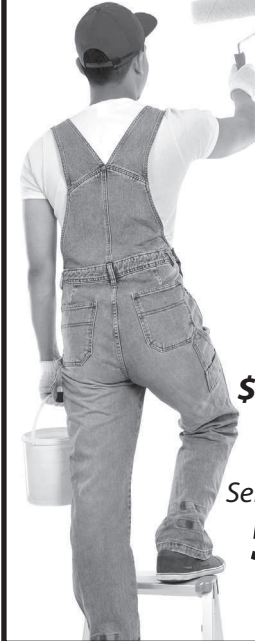
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