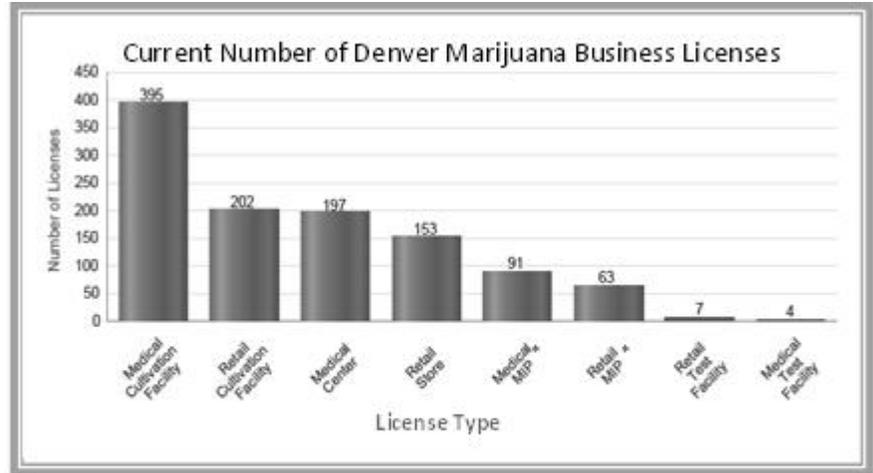


Denver’s Approach to Protecting Public Health Related to Legalized Marijuana

Since Colorado legalized medical marijuana use in 2000 and recreational marijuana use in 2014, the marijuana industry has had a substantial impact in Denver. As of December 2016, there were more than 1,100 active Denver marijuana business licenses, although many businesses hold multiple licenses at a single location. Consumer safety quickly became a priority for Denver’s Department of Environmental Health, which was the first health agency in the world to inspect marijuana food businesses for product safety starting in 2010.



*Information Provided by the Denver Department of Excise and Licenses. Graph Created by the Denver Office of Marijuana Policy. Numbers as of December 2016. *MIP = Marijuana Infused Products Manufacturer.

Denver Environmental Health’s Public Inspections Division is responsible for overseeing the regulation and safety of marijuana products in the following ways:

- Conducting plan reviews.
- Approving business licenses.
- Providing education and compliance assistance for the industry.
- Using the Denver Food Establishment Regulations to inspect infused food and retail facilities at a minimum of two times each year.
- Investigating complaints and public health concerns associated with contaminated marijuana products.
- Issuing recall orders and press releases to remove unsafe products from commerce.
- Assessing fines for repeat violations or conditions that constitute a significant consumer safety hazard.
- Serving as a resource for consumers with questions or concerns.
- Referring issues or violations to other local and state agencies, when appropriate.

Denver Dept. of Environmental Health’s Regulatory Activities (as of 12/1/16)



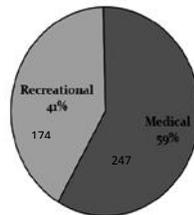
2,504 Investigator site visits to marijuana related facilities conducted since 2013.



81 investigations pertaining to marijuana products potentially contaminated with unapproved pesticides were conducted between 2015-2016.



35 of these investigations had positive test results for unapproved pesticides used, with 23 of them testing positive for two or more specific pesticides.



421 marijuana products were recalled with the majority being medical marijuana products, between January 2015 and June 2016.



305,520 units of marijuana products have been recalled due to potential contamination with unapproved pesticides.



26 press releases were placed in circulation to make consumers aware in cases where potentially contaminated product had been sold to the public.

Marijuana-related hospitalizations in Denver

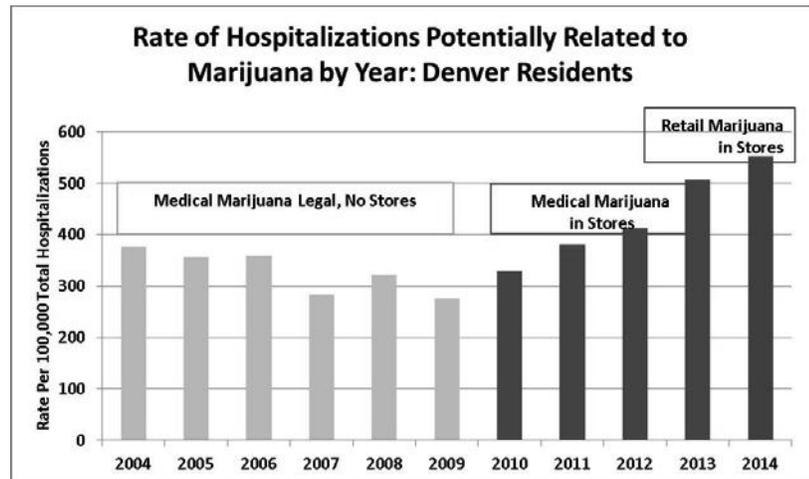
Looking at the rate of hospitalizations that were potentially related to marijuana* over time among Denver residents, we see that the rate (number of marijuana hospitalizations divided by total number of hospitalizations and multiplied by 100,000) decreased somewhat during the time when medical marijuana was legal but not yet available in stores.

Hospitalizations began to increase in 2010 when medical marijuana became available in stores and continued to rise in 2014 after retail marijuana became available in stores.

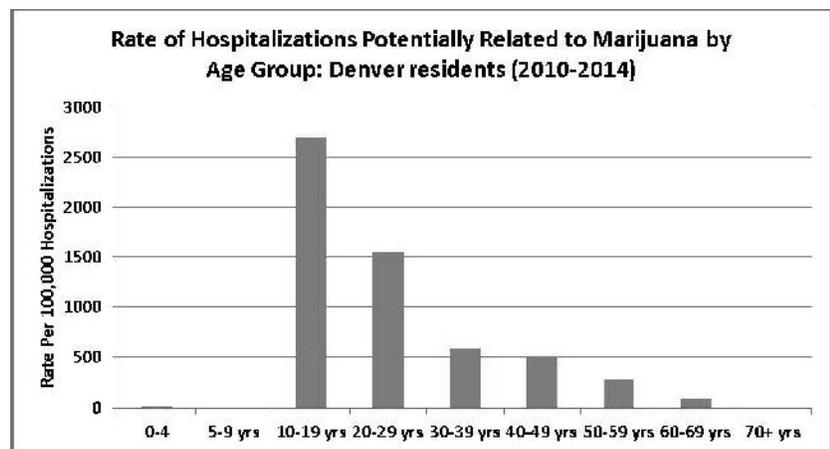
Since medical marijuana became available in stores, there were very few hospitalizations potentially associated with marijuana among 0-4 year olds, none among 5-9 year olds, and few among people aged 60 or older.

The highest rates were seen among patients aged 10-19 years followed by 20-29 year olds.

**Potentially marijuana-related hospitalizations are ones where a patient had at least one diagnosis of marijuana abuse, dependence, or poisoning in the first three diagnoses listed for the encounter.*



Source: Colorado Hospital Association, Denver residents



Source: Colorado Hospital Association, Denver residents

What are we doing?

- Conducting routine inspections and investigations to ensure safety measures are in place.
- Using [data to write reports](#) and share results with communities and policy makers.
- Supporting other public health agencies that are monitoring the public health impact of marijuana.

What can you do?

- If you use marijuana and have children or teenagers in your home, store it safely so they cannot access it.
- Be ready to [talk with teens](#) you know about marijuana.
- If odors from marijuana grow facilities are a nuisance, you can file an odor complaint by calling 3-1-1 (720-913-1311), or emailing 311@denvergov.org.