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NEWS RELEASE
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**TWO ARRESTED AT ILLEGAL MARIJUANA GROW
ON SEVERAL PARCELS IN NORTH PALM SPRINGS**

NORTH PALM SPRINGS – Two men were arrested and about 1,200 marijuana plants seized during a search warrant operation at an illegal marijuana grow conducted on Sept. 19, 2019, by the DA's Riverside County Cannabis Regulation Task Force.

Arrested on suspicion of illegal marijuana cultivation were Ronald David Barrett, DOB: 12-12-64; and Jose Manuel Mercado Beltran, DOB: 10-11-75. Both lived on the property at 16th Avenue and Indian Canyon Drive in the unincorporated area of North Palm Springs.

During a previous flyover of the area by a California Highway Patrol aircraft, the illegal marijuana grow was spotted on several parcels totaling about six acres.

Due to the size of the property, also assisting the Cannabis Regulation Task Force (CRTF) in the operation were members of the DA's Gang Impact Team (GIT), and the Riverside county Auto-theft Interdiction Detail (RAID).

The purpose of the Cannabis Regulation Task Force, which is operated by the DA's Office, is to protect properly licensed legal cannabis businesses and enforce regulatory requirements which protect the environment and consumers.

Agencies currently on CRTF include the DA's Bureau of Investigation, the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, the Hemet Police Department, the Riverside Police Department, the Temecula Police Department, the Palm Springs Police Department, the Murrieta Police Department, and the Riverside County Code Enforcement Department.

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