

# Congratulations! It's a New Industry!

The Colorado Recreational Marijuana Experience

Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

[www.colorado.gov/cdphe](http://www.colorado.gov/cdphe)



# How did we get here?



- Colorado Legalization
  - Passed in 2012, Implemented in 2013
  - Expanded beyond medical marijuana to recreational use, commercial grows and retail sales
  - “Basement growers” scaling up to warehouses
  - Hash oil explosions occurring in homes pose risk for large scale operations.
- A new industry was created
  - Aspects of retail, agriculture, manufacturing
  - OSHA oversight but no specific industry guidance.

# Worker safety & health concerns

- Colorado occupational health and safety community had much concern and wanted to be involved in assisting the new industry.
- March 2014, Marijuana Industries Health and Safety Workgroup was formed.
  - Primary output goal: A report that details best-practice guidelines and recommendations to protect and promote the health and safety of marijuana industry workers.
- Original Structure included 6 sub-work groups
  - Existing knowledge
  - Industrial hygiene
  - Local & Environmental health issues
  - Occupational medicine
  - Safety & Security
  - Wellness & Safety Culture



# Workgroup objectives

- Convene a broad-based stakeholder group (including industry) to solicit input on best practices
- Conduct on-site technical tours of marijuana growers, dispensaries, and infused product manufacturers
- Developing a comprehensive summary of occupational health and safety best practices
- Provide industry training

# Different perspectives

- IH professionals (CIH)- health focused
- Safety professionals (ASP, CSP)- safety focused
- Industry partners- legal expertise, operation focused
- Medical professionals- occupational medicine focused
- Insurance providers (TPAs)- claims related, workers' compensation focused



# Finding partners

- Occupational Health and Safety organizations
  - Local sections of ASSE, AIHA
  - Center for Health, Work and Environment (MAP ERC)
- Industry partners
  - Cultivation & extraction facilities
  - Industry group (legal)
  - Workers' Comp Insurers
  - Private Safety Consultants
- Local and Federal government partners
  - NIOSH
  - State & Local PH Departments
  - OSHA & OSHA consultation
  - State environmental programs (waste, air)
  - State Department of Agriculture

Colorado State University  
OSHA Consultation Services



Center for Health, Work & Environment  
colorado school of public health



COLORADO  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Challenges

- Stakeholder management & engagement
- Vastly different scales of industry
- Politics & priorities
- Change in leadership
- Writing as one voice
  - Report published in January 2017:  
<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/marijuana-occupational-safety-and-health>
  - Presentation at CSTE 2017 Annual Conference in Boise, ID

# Contacts

Roberta Smith

Manager, Occupational Health Program

Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

[roberta.smith@state.co.us](mailto:roberta.smith@state.co.us)

Meredith Towle

State Occupational Epidemiologist

Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

[meredith.towle@wyo.gov](mailto:meredith.towle@wyo.gov)