



# The Rocky Mountain High Experience

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of Public Health  
and Environment

# Summary

- History of Marijuana in Colorado
- Role of Health Dept
- Role of the Laboratory
- Lessons learned



# History of Marijuana in CO



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- Nov. 2000 — Amendment 20 Medical Marijuana
  - Nov. 2012 — Amendment 64 Retail Marijuana
  - Dec. 2012 — Task force created for implementing amendment 64
  - Mar. 2013 — Task force issues recommendations on regulation and taxes
  - May 2013 — Governor signs bills based on task force recommendations
  - Sep. 2013 — Colorado Dept. of Revenue (CDOR) adopts Colorado Retail Marijuana Code (HB – 13-1317)
  - Nov. 2013 — Vote on Proposition AA, a 15% excise tax plus 10% sales tax
  - Jan. 2014 — Regulations go into effect
  - Mar. 2014 — CDOR rules passed

# History of Marijuana in CO



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- What did this mean for CDPHE?
  - CDOR's not CDPHE's but following specific roles for CDPHE:
    - "Monitor changes in drug use patterns... and the emerging science and medical information relevant to the health effects associated with marijuana use."
    - "...appoint a panel of health care professionals with expertise in cannabinoid physiology to monitor the relevant information."

# History of Marijuana in CO



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## *Other potential roles for CDPHE:*

- C.R.S. Sec. 24-20-112(3) requires "a state agency" to "work with a private advisory group to develop good laboratory practices for the retail marijuana industry."
- C.R.S. Sec. 24-20-112(5) requires "a state agency" to "establish educational materials regarding appropriate retail marijuana use and prevention of marijuana use by those under twenty-one years of age." The Governor's Office is leading, and CDPHE may provide input.



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## *Other potential roles for CDPHE:*

- C.R.S. Sec. 24-33.5-516(2)(k) – CDPHE may be asked to support other agencies in providing "data on emergency room visits related to the use of marijuana and the outcomes of those visits, including information from the Colorado Poison Control Center."
- C.R.S. Sec. 25-14-103.5 amends the Colorado Clean Indoor Air Act to include marijuana. CDPHE will likely play a role similar to the one it plays with tobacco.

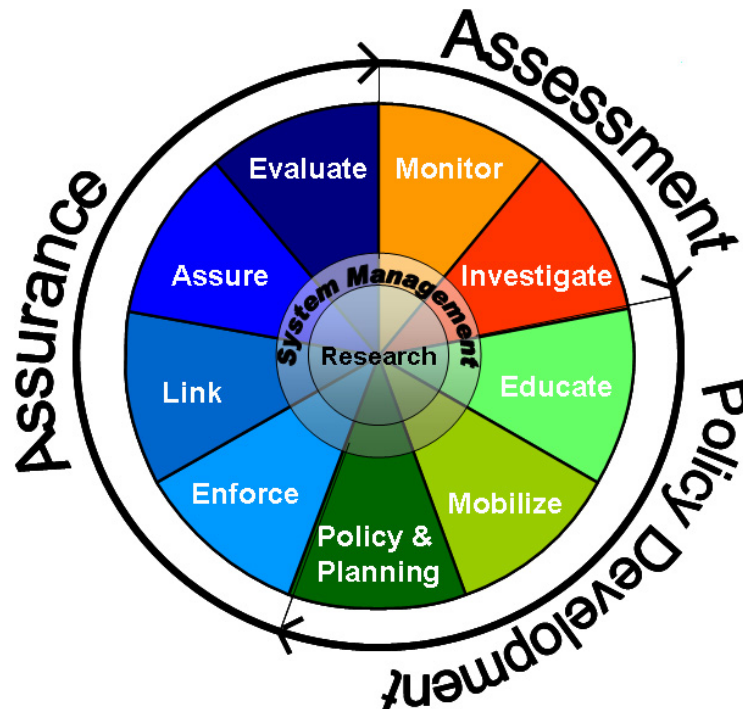
# History of Marijuana in CO



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## *Beyond roles outlined in the bills:*

- CDPHE also will continue it's regular duties to protect the health and safety of the public.



- These duties may intersect with recreational marijuana.

# Example: Synthetic Marijuana Outbreak



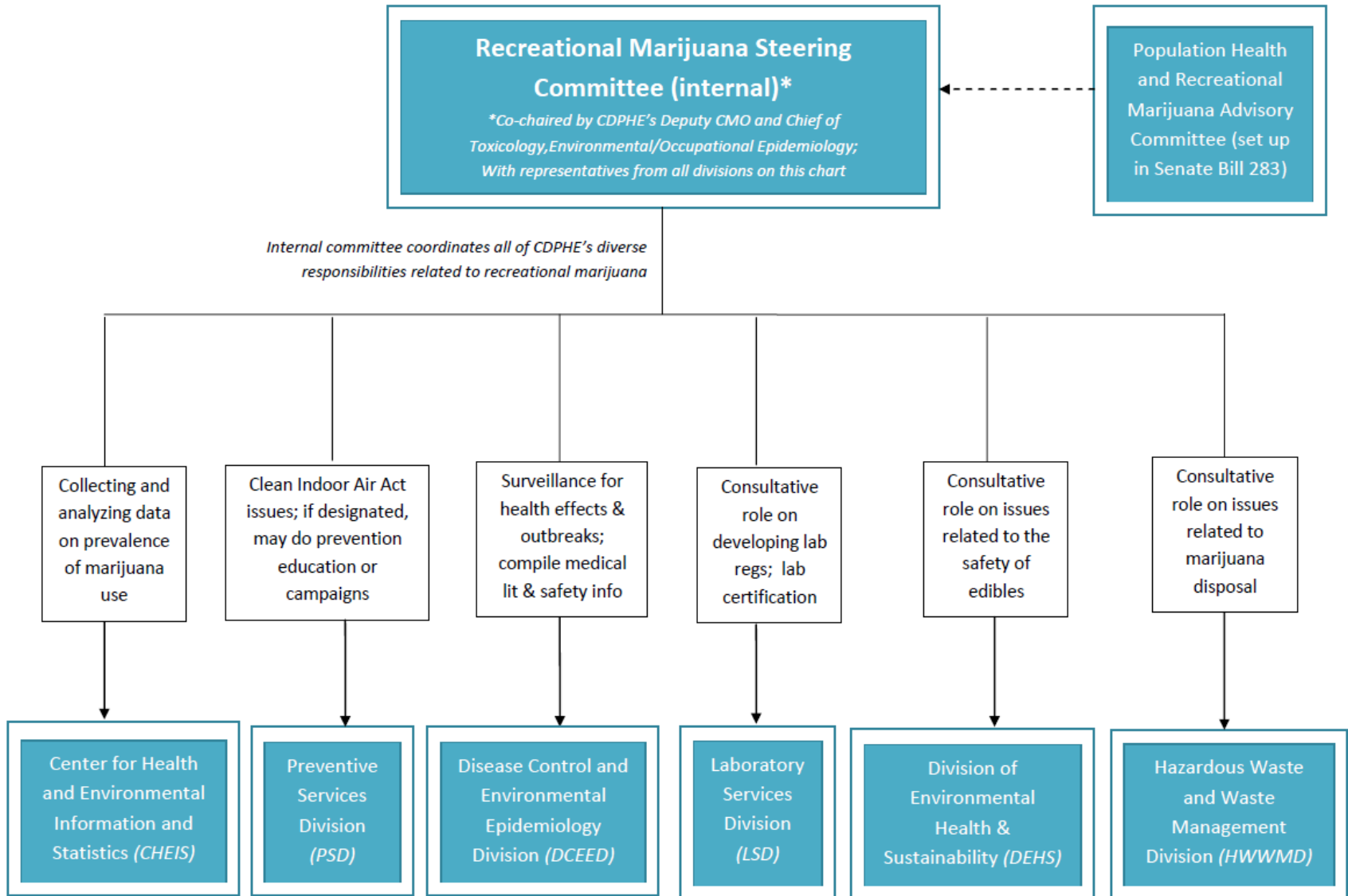
- Fall 2013 – over 200 Emergency Room Visits related to synthetic marijuana use reported to CDPHE, with at least 10 ICU admissions.
  - Novel compound discovered during investigation.
  - Largest “outbreak” of its kind in US history
- Lessons from synthetic marijuana outbreak may guide efforts to detect contaminated marijuana products.
  - Literature shows marijuana can be contaminated by bacteria, mold, and chemicals like pesticides, lead, and formaldehyde.
- Goal - to quickly remove any contaminated products off the market to protect health of the public.



# CDPHE Internal Governance



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# Retail Marijuana and the Lab:



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New Lab Director



**DEA?**

**Reference lab?  
certification?**

**PT?**

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**testing ?**

**Federal funding at  
risk?**



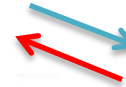
# Certification of Retail Marijuana Testing Facilities (RMTF):



**RMTF**



Department  
of Revenue



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**RMTF**

- Apr. 4, 2014- CDPHE agrees to serve as inspectors
- Apr. 21 - Inspection request and checklist provided to RMTF
- Apr. 24-30- Four RMTF inspected
- May 1- CDOR grants provisional certification

**ISSUES: Proficiency testing and Reference lab**

# Recommendations for Testing Requirements:



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Contaminant	Acceptable Limit
Escherichia coli	Negative-None detected
Salmonella species	Negative-None detected
Bile tolerant gram negative bacteria	Max Limit: 10,000 CFU
Aspergillus sp.	Negative-None detected
Mucor sp.	Negative-None detected

- **Presence of nucleic acid does not equal live organism**
- ***E. coli* and molds ubiquitous**
- **Molds public health importance in immunocompetent?**
- **Risk-based testing**

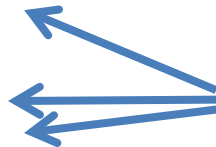
# Registry of DUI/DUID Test Results:



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- Guide education efforts
- Guide testing targets
- Guide law enforcement
- Local, state and National



# Roadside Drug Testing Instruments:



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- No National “approved” list



# Lessons Learned:



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- Don't wait, get involved
- Work with other Divisions within your agency and state
- Reach out to other states.
- Enjoy the ride.
- Marijuana can be put in **anything!**



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# Thank you!

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