



CITRUS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

A Nationally Accredited Law Enforcement Agency

—SHERIFF—
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"For Sale" House Yields Marijuana

(Citrus County) Sheriff's Office dispatchers received a call at 1:42 p.m. on Friday regarding the existence of a large amount of marijuana plants located inside a garage at 5800 W. Knoxville Lane in Dunnellon. A locksmith had been called to the home, which is currently for sale, to unlock and rekey a door on the inside of the residence leading into the garage. The owner of the home who contacted the locksmith, a female living in Miami, had been unable to open the deadbolt a few weeks earlier when visiting the residence.

Upon unlocking the door, the locksmith made an unusual discovery – a garage full of potted marijuana plants covered the entire floor. The Sheriff's Office was then called. When deputies arrived on scene and walked through the house, they could smell the odor of marijuana throughout the home. They called in detectives of the Tactical Impact Unit, and a search warrant was executed on Friday evening.

In total, about 64 marijuana plants were discovered ranging from 4 to 5 feet tall. They were held up by an elaborate network of strings; fans and special lighting were found throughout the garage. The operator of the grow was utilizing a technique commonly found in grow houses in which the electric meter is bypassed to power the operation, essentially stealing power from the utility company.

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The find resulted in detectives processing about 64 plants that had a potential yield of 1 to 2 pounds of hydroponic marijuana per plant. The potential estimated worth of the plants after another month of growth would be around \$256,000.

The resident of the home, Leonides Gomez, 44, of the above address, is currently in the Marion County Jail on a DUI charge. Detectives will be acquiring a warrant for his arrest for cultivation of marijuana, theft of electricity, possession of drug paraphernalia and possibly other charges.

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