



Cannabis Data Science

Cananbis Data Science #140

December 28th, 2023

Mississippi News Bulletin - 2023-12-21

Statement on Medical Cannabis Hold 12.21.23

To protect the health and safety of medical cannabis patients, an administrative hold has been placed on a large number of medical cannabis products until retesting can be conducted to ensure the various products meet regulatory standards. The Mississippi Medical Cannabis Program is taking swift action to address the situation, with retesting being done as quickly as possible.

The Mississippi Medical Cannabis Program is committed to upholding the highest standards of product quality and patient safety. Please know that the MMCP is working diligently to resolve this matter and will continue to provide updated information as it becomes available. As retesting yields results that are within regulatory standards, administrative holds will be lifted with products being made available again through licensed medical cannabis dispensaries. Patients should stay in contact with their dispensary to see what products are available.

Source:

https://www.mmcp.ms.gov/?fbclid=IwAR1ncdtODhJquA5Z7l_jiAP7kCJGu1_T4YubosGM3dmAUM9msiw5oWaCf30

Mississippi News Bulletin Update - 2023-12-21

UPDATE to Statement on Medical Cannabis Hold 12.21.23

JACKSON, Miss. - The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) continues an administrative hold on a large number of medical cannabis products until retesting can be completed. The administrative hold impacts only a portion of the medical cannabis products available throughout the state. The specific circumstances leading to the hold remain under investigation by MSDH, but the retesting is to validate results related to the use of pesticides and presence of mycotoxins. There are no reports of illnesses related to the impacted products.

MSDH is overseeing the retesting of the medical cannabis products. Retesting is being conducted in licensed medical cannabis testing facilities with validated testing methods in place and approved by MSDH. Retesting is being prioritized based on the type/category of medical cannabis products. For example, cannabis flower/bud will be tested first because it serves as the base for many of the products, followed by concentrates and infused products. As batches of products are cleared, they will be removed from the hold, and be back on the market. Patients are encouraged to contact dispensaries to see what products are available.

The Mississippi Medical Cannabis Program (MMCP) remains committed to upholding patient safety throughout this process.

"Through the state's seed to sale tracking system, the agency can isolate the batch and lot numbers associated with this administrative hold and expedite the retesting. The tracking system is an invaluable tool to assist with regulatory compliance and overall product safety," said Laura Goodson, Director of the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Program.

The Mississippi State Department of Health issued the initial hold on December 21, 2023.

Source:

https://www.mmcp.ms.gov/?fbclid=IwAR1ncdtODhJquA5Z7I_jiAP7kCJGu1_T4YubosGM3dmAUM9msiw5oWaCf30

Marijuana Moment Article - 2023-12-25



By Heather Harrison, Mississippi Free Press

After an anonymous phone call alleged that Rapid Analytics cannabis testing lab was not conducting the proper procedure for pesticides, the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) placed an administrative hold on all medical cannabis products that underwent testing at the Natchez, Mississippi-based facility, lab spokesperson Mamie Henry said.

Source: <https://www.marijuanamoment.net/mississippi-regulators-place-hold-on-large-number-of-medical-marijuana-after-receiving-anonymous-call/>



Wednesday morning, MSDH emailed Rapid Analytics to tell them about the anonymous tip, and both groups had an “emergency Zoom meeting” to review the lab’s procedures and cannabis-testing reports from the past couple of months, Henry said.



“They have no basis for anything, except an anonymous call, which has shut the entire industry down pretty much because we do 70 percent of the testing for the state,” Henry told the Mississippi Free Press on Thursday.

Dispensaries cannot sell any cannabis that Rapid Analytics tested until MSDH provides further instruction.



Henry assured patients, cultivators and dispensary owners that the lab is “dealing with it very, very, very rapidly” and “very professionally to ensure that the state opens up as quickly as possible.” Rapid Analytics is retesting all cannabis samples, even though MSDH does not require them to do extra analysis, she added.



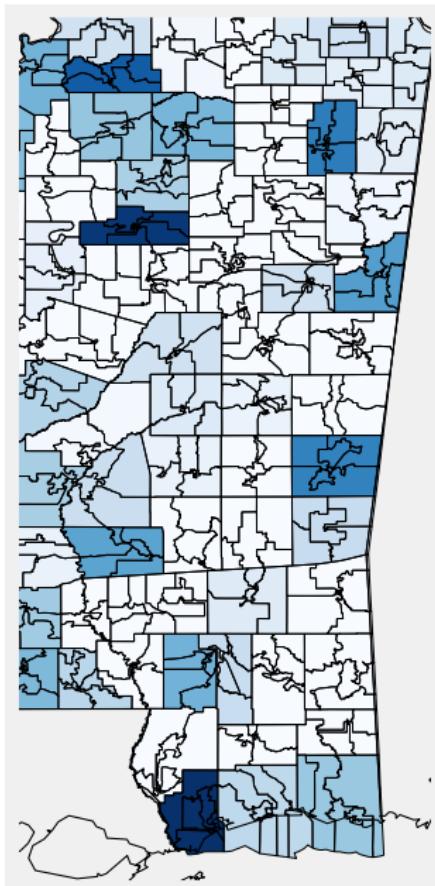
Dispensaries and cultivators are waiting for MSDH to give guidance on how to retest or discard medical cannabis products from Rapid Analytics. Henry said the lab has sent verification of its protocols to MSDH.

Data

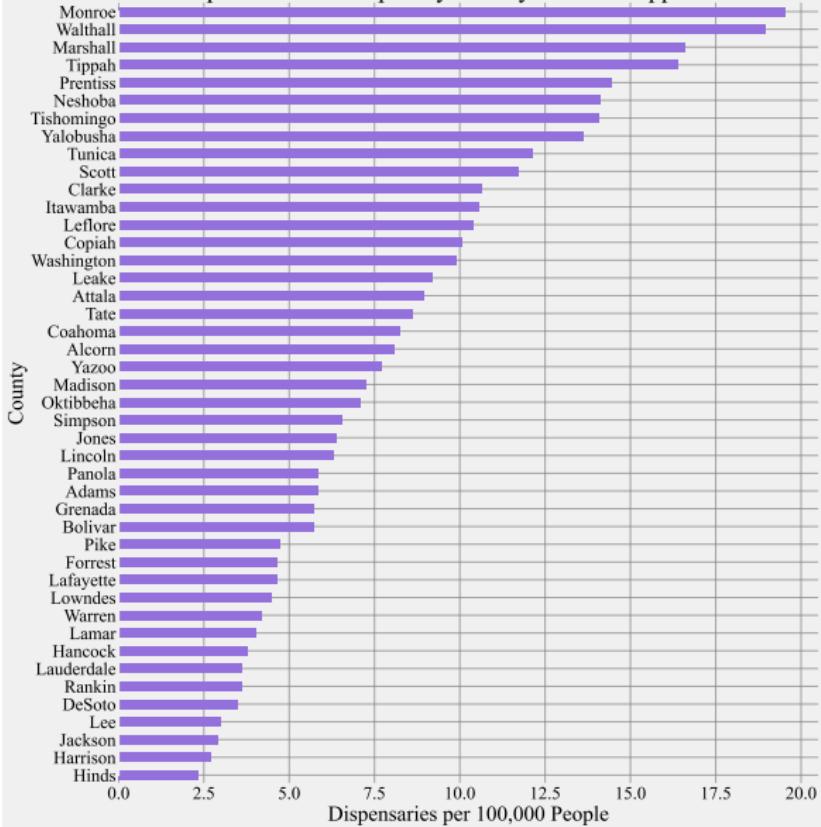
- Population of Mississippi: 2,938,928 (2022)
- Population of Connecticut: 3,617,176 (2022)

Data Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/CT>

Dispensaries per 100,000 people by county in Mississippi



Dispensaries Per Capita by County in Mississippi in 2023



Connecticut approved an increased limit of mold and yeast allowed in medical marijuana at one of the state's two cannabis testing labs through private emails last year, documents show.

At the request of AltaSci Labs, the state Department of Consumer Protection agreed to raise the total passing level of yeast and mold from 10,000 colony forming units per gram to 1 million per gram for the lab, according to August 2020 emails obtained via a Hearst Connecticut Media Group public records request.

The request, which also included the addition of testing for a specific genus of mold, was the result of a 2015 study and changes from other states, officials said. Meanwhile, at Northeast Laboratories, the state's other cannabis testing facility, the passing limit remains 10,000 CFU per gram.

Connecticut, which is in the throes of launching its adult-use recreational program, has about 54,000 medical marijuana patients and none were notified about the change in mold and yeast levels.

Source: <https://www.ctinsider.com/news/article/Connecticut-raises-mold-levels-for-medical-16678474.php>

Zavaleta said he's been surprised by negative reactions to the move — he expected it to be met with positive reactions because of the Aspergillus testing, which he believes makes the product safer, he said.

He and Marriott said the new standards protect patient safety.

"We kept the (1 million per gram) where other states didn't put a cap on the total use for yeast and mold," Marriott said. "They've actually removed the caps on total yeast and mold. So we felt like this was a reasonable change to still protect our patients and provide good product for our patients."

The differing standards are confusing for patients, according to Rinaldi, a Guilford resident who has been a medical marijuana patient since June 2019.

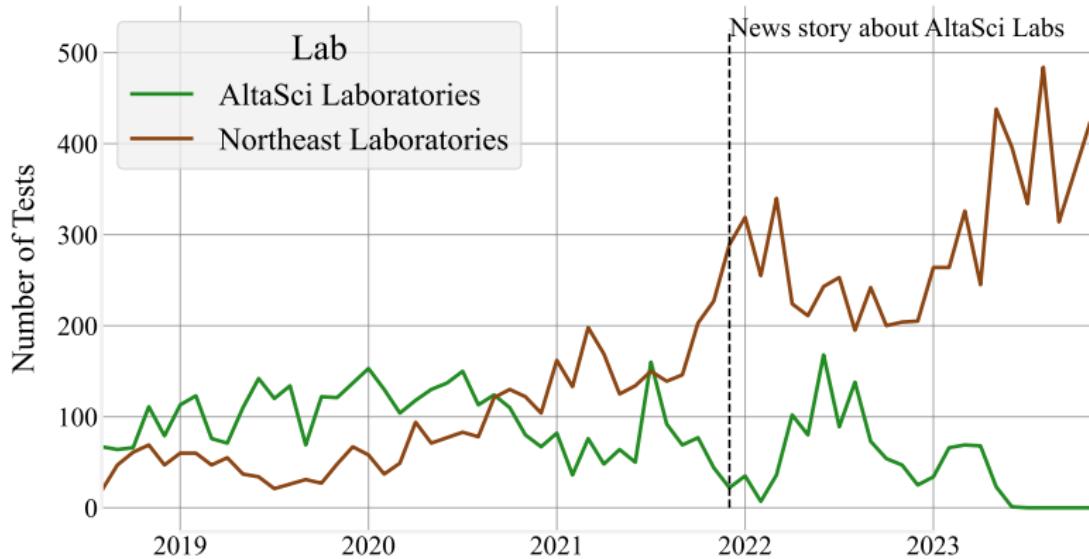
"The lack of consistency and transparency creates unnecessary confusion and further exacerbates already-unsafe conditions," Rinaldi said.

The reports between the labs are not in a consistent format, either, and don't display all the same information. For example, sometimes a report will give the number of CFUs per gram found, and in other instances, the reports will simply indicate that the sample passed.

The state doesn't have standards for formatting or requirements for how labs report testing results, although the reports are available online, Marriott said.

Zavaleta agreed that setting uniform standards would be helpful. It's easier to test other products, with federal standards, he said.

Tests per Lab by Month in Connecticut



Market Share by Lab by Month in Connecticut





Thank you for coming.

Lessons of the Day

- What happens early happens often.