



Nebraska Says Colorado Pot Isn't Staying Across The Border

KIRK SEIGLER | FEBRUARY 03, 2015

There's a PSA that greets you on the radio when you're driving the flat stretch of Colorado State Highway 113 near the Nebraska state line: "With marijuana legal under Colorado law, we've all got a few things to know. ... Once you get here, can't leave our state. Stick around, this place is pretty great."

B.J. Wilkinson, police chief of nearby Sidney, Neb., rolls his eyes whenever he hears that spot, made by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Sidney is the first town north of the border, and Wilkinson knows firsthand that not everyone's listening to those ads.

"Do you really think that somebody listening to that is going to say, 'Oh, they said on the radio I shouldn't take my marijuana back into Nebraska. So because they said it on the radio and I got a warning, I'm gonna listen to it'? Nah," he says.

It's been more than a year since Colorado formally legalized recreational marijuana, and the police in the rural counties that border the state are reporting big increases in illegal marijuana trafficking.

Wilkinson says marijuana-related offenses in Sidney have increased 50 percent in that time, jumping from 100 to 150 cases.

"I'm concerned what [Colorado's legalization] will lead to in terms of a change in culture," Wilkinson says, "a change in the way that we enjoy a certain quality, a certain type of life, in small-town America."

Wilkinson likes that small town life. He's spent his whole law enforcement career working in small towns. He's proud of Sidney, and it shows.

Sidney, with a population near 7,000, is the headquarters of the hunting and camping retailer Cabela's. It's expanding, and so is the local hospital. There are a lot of jobs to be had here. Wilkinson says **Sidney is thriving — and he doesn't want Colorado's experiment with marijuana to get in the way.** ■

Rest of article here: <http://goo.gl/wdccJL>

