



## **LOMITA STATION**

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## **News Release**

**Leroy D. Baca, Sheriff**

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On May 16, 2013, Lomita Station detectives arrested Tom Kim, 37, from Rancho Palos Verdes, for illegally cultivating marijuana, possession of marijuana and hashish for sales, felony child endangerment and conducting a business in the city of Rancho Palos Verdes without a license. His common law wife, Molly Hwang, 45, was arrested for felony child endangerment charges and faces additional charges of illegally cultivating marijuana, possession of marijuana and hashish for sales.

Lomita Station patrol units and detectives responded to a call for service of a residential burglary in the 27800 block of Alaflora Drive in the city of Rancho Palos Verdes. An intensive search of the neighborhood for the burglary suspects was conducted. During the search, detectives came upon a suspicious person, closely matching the description of the burglary suspect inside a parked vehicle at 2000 block of Noble View Drive. The detectives made contact with him believing that he was possibly involved with burglarizing the home on Noble View Drive as well as the earlier burglary on Alaflora Drive and an additional suspect was possibly inside the house. Deputies surrounded the house. A male, later identified as Tom Kim, emerged from the Noble View Drive home and was met by deputy personnel. The suspicious person and Tom Kim were both detained pending a burglary investigation. Upon clearing the home, detectives stumbled upon the elaborate marijuana grow operation within the residence.

Detectives located numerous marijuana plants in the backyard and throughout the house. In one room, detectives found numerous glass jars filled with marijuana buds, packaging and scales. Another room was used as a dry room where deputies found hundreds of plants hanging from a clothesline. There was also evidence of manufacturing hashish, concentrated cannabis, and packaging for sales. A washing machine in the backyard was located and believed to be used to make hashish from the marijuana plants. It appeared the suspects were supplying marijuana to dispensaries, but had no documentation indicating they were operating a legitimate business.

Detectives confiscated nearly 100 pounds of marijuana and approximately \$10,000 cash which was seized by the Department's Narcotics Bureau. Based upon detectives estimation of the quantity and moneys seized, detectives believe this was a \$1 million dollar a year operation.

Molly Hwang, Tom Kim's, common law wife, turned herself in to authorities at Lomita Station and

was arrested for child endangerment. Their minor child, who was at school during the search, was taken into protective custody by deputies.

Tom Kim and Molly Hwang were released on a \$100,000 bond. An arraignment date is scheduled for Tom Kim on Friday, June 14, 2013 in Torrance Superior Court. Molly Hwang's arraignment date will be held on Thursday, June 6, 2013 in Torrance Superior Court.

For Additional Information Contact:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
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