

LAWEEKLY

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**HALLOWEEN IDEAS FOR
SWEETS AND SPIRITS**

**THE FALLOUT FROM THE
CITY COUNCIL LEAKED
RECORDINGS**

**CALIFORNIA DOJ REBRANDS
POT ENFORCEMENT**

Halloween Weekly

There's Still Plenty of Time (and Two Whole Weekends) to Get Wicked in L.A.

By Lina Lccaro and Shana Nys Dambrot

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HALLOWEEN - NO TRICKS, JUST TREATS

It's a bad enough trick when Halloween falls on a Monday, so we're just focusing on treats. We've conjured up a bucket full of ideas for sweets and spirits.

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



TOUS les JOURS, a French-Asian bakery café chain that offers more than 300 different kinds of artisan pastries, gourmet cakes and desserts baked in-store daily, has a new Trick-or-Treat Collection, launching just in time for Halloween. Featuring eight treats, the spooky season-inspired collection is available at participating TOUS les JOURS locations now through Oct. 31.

There's a Mummy Cake, a 7-inch chocolate cake topped with ganache and choco-

late buttercream with a spooky mummy design. The Jack-O'-Lantern Cake, 7-inch, four-layer chocolate cake, is made with orange buttercream, seasonal sprinkles and coconut flakes. The Halloween Cloud Cake is topped with strawberries over signature Cloud cream cake with a seasonal cake topper. The Pumpkin Cream Cheese Cake is an 8-inch sheet cake made with cream cheese and Cloud cream-based icing, with pumpkin spice and pecan topping.



Additional seasonal treats include Halloween-themed sugar cookies available in jack-o'-lantern and mummy designs, and autumnal twist donuts featuring pumpkin spice and chocolate with seasonal sprinkles.

Velverie Café and Teahouse, a Beverly Hills café inspired by European café culture and celebrating the best of Old Hollywood glamor, will host a Halloween event with a specially themed afternoon tea on Saturdays, Oct. 22 and Oct. 29.

There will be crystal vendors and a tarot reader, and each ticket includes afternoon tea for one, with all the food menu items included, and one of three Halloween cocktails (non-alcoholic options also will be available). Additional drinks will be available for purchase, as well as Velverie's regular Afternoon Tea options. Cost is \$80 per person, and reservations are available Via Resy (10/22) / Via Resy (10/29).

The London West Hollywood will host its first annual 'Spooky Tea Inspired by the Sanderson Sisters,' which will be offered on Saturday, Oct. 29, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., in the haunted lair, with treats and surprises inside the Boxwood restaurant. Pricing is \$84 for adults, and \$42 for children 12

and under. Costumes are strongly encouraged. Book on OpenTable.com. For large parties, contact Deborah Davis Bonk, the hotel's private dining coordinator, at dda-visbonk@thelondonweho.com.

The Fresh Corpse Survivor has returned to the Riviera31 at Sofitel Los Angeles. The smoky cocktail infused with lemon juice and simple syrup will get you into the Halloween spirit. It's topped off with flaming absinthe.

If it's your turn to stay in and handy out candy to the neighborhood goblins, grab a bottle of Scapegrace Black Gin. Like all quality gins, it begins with intense juniper and exotic botanicals. The master distiller used a combination of local sweet potato, aronia berries, pineapple and saffron, as well as Butterfly pea flower, which they sourced from Southeast Asia.

The result is a gin with an exciting nose of pineapple and lemon, followed by spicy juniper. The flavor profile of Scapegrace Black is unique, marrying a gin-drinker's love of juniper with something dark and delightfully devious. But the real show-stopper is, when mixed with tonic and/or citrus, Scapegrace Black goes from noir to a light lavender. **[A]**

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THE FALLOUT FROM THE CITY COUNCIL LEAKED RECORDINGS

More than a week has passed since a leaked recording was made public and flipped the L.A. City Council on its head, leading to apologies, resignations and questions about the future.

BY ISAI ROCHA

The city of Los Angeles was shaken to its core after a leaked recording revealed councilmembers using racist epithets, bad-mouthing other councilmembers and raising flags about the city's redistricting process.

The hour-long leaked recordings were posted to Reddit and later deleted by an anonymous user who went by the username "Honest Finding 1581." The live recordings went unnoticed for several days, until Knock L.A. and the Los Angeles Times obtained the audio.

Councilmembers Nury Martinez, Kevin de Leon and Gil Cedillo, as well as L.A. Federation of Labor president Ron Herrera, was involved in the 2021 conversation during a closed-door meeting.

Some of the more inflammatory remarks made in the conversations came from Martinez, who can be heard bringing up L.A. District Attorney George Gascon and saying, "Fuck that guy. He's with the Blacks." At a separate point in the conversation, Martinez described Councilman Mike Bonin's adopted child, who is Black, as a "changuito," which translates to "monkey" in English, later saying she wanted to take the child "to the back" during a community parade because he "needs a beat-down."

"We are appalled, angry and absolutely disgusted that Nury Martinez attacked our son with horrific racist slurs, and talked about her desire to physically harm him. It's vile, abhorrent, and utterly disgraceful," Bonin said after the audio was made public. "The City Council needs to remove her as Council President immediately, and she needs to resign from office. Any parent reading her comments will know she is unfit for public office."

Since the leak, Martinez and Herrera resigned from their presidential positions. Martinez initially resigned from her post as council president and later relinquished her seat as the 4th district's council representative.

"I take responsibility for what I said and there are no excuses for those comments," Martinez said in a statement. "I'm so sorry."

In a 921-word resignation letter to the city, Martinez highlighted multiple achievements in her time as councilmember, thanked her staff and her constituents, but did not address the leaked conversation, did not offer apologies as she did previously and did not address her future plans.

Both de Leon and Cedillo offered apologies for their roles in the conversations as both engaged in jokes about local protesters and the Oaxacan community in Boyle Heights, which resides in de Leon's district.

"On that day, I fell short of the expectations we set for our leaders – and I will hold myself to a higher standard," de Leon said in a statement. "There were comments made in the context of this meeting that are wholly inappropriate; and I regret appearing to condone and even contribute to certain insensitive comments made about a colleague and his family in private. I've reached out to that colleague personally."

Since then, neither councilmember has been publicly heard from, with O'Farrell saying he had conversations with Cedillo, but could not get hold of de Leon.

As of this writing, neither Cedillo, nor de Leon have resigned from the council, despite pressure from not just local officials, but also The White House, which addressed the leaked tapes and suggested the resignations of all involved.

"The president is glad to see that one of the participants in that conversation has resigned, but they all should. He believes that they all should resign," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said during an October 11 press conference. "The language that was used and tolerated in that conversation was unacceptable and it was appalling. They should all step down."

Martinez announced a leave of absence right before the October 12 city council meeting, which nearly did not take place as the council chambers were filled with protesters, shouting for the resignations of the three councilmembers.

De Leon and Cedillo were both pres-

ent for the meeting, but eventually asked to leave by acting council president Mitch O'Farrell.

After the departures of de Leon and Cedillo, Angelenos expressed their pain and anger through three hours of public comment.

The following council meeting never got underway as protesters filled the chambers for a second day, leading to an early adjournment.

"Colleagues, we've lost quorum, so... all items will be continued until Friday," O'Farrell said toward the conclusion of the meeting. "This meeting is adjourned."

The Friday meeting never happened, as Councilman Bonin tested positive for COVID-19 and the council lacked quorum again.

On Monday, October 17, O'Farrell announced he would be removing Councilmembers Kevin de León and Gil Cedillo from their committee chairmanships and assignments.

O'Farrell disclosed that councilmembers are required to remain on at least one

committee, per Los Angeles City Council rules, but he and his office would be "ironing out the details" for the councilmember removals.

"My mission and my duty is to help this city heal and to keep it moving forward so that we can all move on from this terrible time," O'Farrell said in a press conference Monday.

Cedillo and de Leon's removal from the committee does not affect their seat on the council itself and O'Farrell said, "there is no new news regarding resignations" and neither showing signs that they intend to resign.

With Martinez stepping down as council president, the remaining council members will have to vote on a new council president, while O'Farrell expressed no desire to run for the position, as his main focus will be on his re-election for the 13th district seat, as well as community matters.

To this point, it is still not clear how the recording leaked, and the council has not discussed any potential suspects, or motives. [E]



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Guests soak up the atmosphere at Carved

PHOTO BY JAKE FABRICIUS



HALLOWEEN WEEKLY

There's Still Plenty of Time (and Two Whole Weekends) to Get Wicked in L.A.

BY LINA LECARO AND SHANA NYS DAMBROT

Halloween lovers start living their spooky nightmares as soon as October begins, putting out the witchy/undead decor, having horror movie marathons, and contemplating costumes, parties and events. It all flies by like a bat outta hell, doesn't it? But if you're just starting to feel the Fall freaky season vibes, we're here for ya. You still have a full week and two weekends to get into the spirit. COVID-19 is still around, but people just aren't scared of it the way they used to be, and most are ready to partake in dark experiential delights in spite of the risk. Here's our annual guide to Fall 2022 amusements, attractions and happenings with plenty to do (and boo) from now through the end of the month. Check out each event's website for dates, times and more info.

Scream Parks

The scariest thing you'll encounter at

all of the big theme parks? Hourlong (or two!) waits to get into individual mazes. If you're not connected or loaded enough to get "fast passes" at the big parks, prepare for very long lines. Luckily, the scare zones, interactive walk-throughs and stage shows at each locale are just as unnerving and entertaining as the more elaborate indoor haunts.

Universal Studios' Halloween Horror Nights tops the big-budget jump scare production list once again this year. They make a great spectacle of the scare zone area, too, with a circus-like intro opening the night and a parade of choreographed orange-and-black clad ghouls closing the night. In between, this year's mazes include Killer Klowns from Outer Space, John Carpenter's Halloween and Blumhouse's *The Black Phone*. The Weeknd brings a fresh new spin on the horror hap with his "After Hours Nightmare," a haunted nightclub environ wherein

the singer (rocking his weird bloody bandaged head look) "stalks your squad through the surreal nightmare of his After Hours music." There's a clubby murder set, an extreme plastic surgery scene, a mannequin masquerade moment and lots of flashing lights in this one, which we give props for its uniqueness, if not any actual scares. We also liked The Weeknd's themed bar (with fancy syringe adorned cocktails), the Jabbawockeez dance show, and the Terror Tram featuring a walk thru Jordan Peele's NOPE sets alongside classics like the Psycho house and hotel. universalstudioshollywood.com/hhn. — LINA LECARO

As for the other biggies, we're still missing Elvira at **Knotts Scary Farm**, but it does have a colorful new "Le Magnifique Carnaval du Grotesque" show that offers an atmospheric old timey feel, plus a "Conjurors: Dark Magic Show" and a variety of interesting scare zones. Returning

mazes include Mesmer: Sideshow of the Mind, Wax Works (about a weirdo who kills guests with a cauldron of bubbling goo), Origins: The Curse of Calico (where the old West meets witchcraft), Pumpkin Eater (you walk into a giant, stinky pumpkin) and longtime favorite Dark Ride (a carnival and funhouse freak-out). By the way, Knotts has modified its underage guardian/ chaperone policy, increasing the number of minors per adult over 21 and giving complimentary passes to anyone with five paid underage guests. knotts.com/events/scary-farm — LINA LECARO

Over at **Six Flags Fright Fest**, they're offering a variety of hellish haunted houses with names like Vault 666 and Truth or Dare, scare zones called CarnivHELL and the Devil's Triangle, and shows themed to voodoo and monsters. You also can do some of their big drop and dizzyingly fast rides in the dark, and don't be surprised



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MAMA G'S
HORROR CAMP
A MUSICAL MASSACRE



**OCTOBER 28TH - 31ST
@ THE BOURBON ROOM**

Ready or not, the 2nd annual Mama G's HORROR CAMP: A Musical Massacre is returning to the Bourbon Room this Halloween 2022! "Mama G" Joan Grande is hosting this 90-minute murderous musical comedy romp on October 28th, 29th, 30th, and 31st. This all-ages spooktacular features an all-star cast that will immerse you in a world where you'll find yourself slaughtered with joy as they sing the best songs from over the decades.

PURCHASE TICKETS
BourbonRoomHollywood.com



if a ghoulish ghoul happens to join you. [sixflags.com/magicmountain/events/fright-fest-event](https://www.sixflags.com/magicmountain/events/fright-fest-event) - **LINA LECARO**

Disneyland never goes full scare fair due to the family heavy crowds, but it does manage to create its own sort of magic with its classic Main Street Pumpkin Festival and parade, the hot ticket Oogie Boogie Bash (sold out) and the now-classic Haunted Mansion Nightmare Before Christmas makeover. There's also mascots in Halloween gear, a special tricky treat menu, projections and Halloween music, and beautiful Dia de los Muertos displays. [disneyland.disney.go.com/events-tours/halloween-time-at-the-disneyland-resort](https://www.disneyland.disney.go.com/events-tours/halloween-time-at-the-disneyland-resort) - **LINA LECARO**

Jacked Jamborees

It's pumpkin spice and everything nice time, and everywhere you look you'll find lit-up gourds galore bringing color and wonder to kiddies and adults, at the following: **Nights of the Jack** is one of the longest strolls in town with monster-themed light displays and hundreds of jack-o'-lanterns real and fake. [nightsofthejack.com](https://www.nightsofthejack.com) **Hauntoween**, the family friendly 150,000-square-foot trick-or-treat and pumpkin-carving event is the best place to show off your pumpkinhead skills. [hauntoween.com/los-angeles](https://www.hauntoween.com/los-angeles) - **LINA LECARO**

Annual Haunted Little Tokyo also will offer a pumpkin patch and carving, scavenger hunt, contests and more. [littletokyola.org/haunted](https://www.littletokyola.org/haunted) Spooky displays, trick-or-treating, open-air live shows, animal pumpkin feedings, photo ops and more take place at the **Boo at the Zoo** the next two weekends. Costumes are encouraged and Mars candies is the sponsor, making this L.A. staple event an animalistic alternative to walking your neighborhood. [lazoo.org/plan-your-visit/special-experiences/boo](https://www.lazoo.org/plan-your-visit/special-experiences/boo) - **LINA LECARO**

Carved at Descanso Gardens. For three weeks in October, hundreds (thousands, maybe) of carved pumpkins line a mile-long meander through the grounds and woodlands of the famous Camellia Forest. This year's nighttime hours event features fresh activities, and new and classic installations along with all the pumpkins ever — such as the extremely Instagrammable pumpkin house and hay maze, UV “black light” experiences, a special Día de los Muertos installation at the amphitheater, and live artisanal pumpkin-carving — plus holiday-themed (aka pumpkin-spiced, probably) food and beverages. [descansogardens.org](https://www.descansogardens.org) - **SHANA NYS DAMBROT**

Nightmares in the Flesh

If you liked Dark Harbor at the Queen Mary, you may or may not like **Shaqtobberfest**, which replaces it this year. It's a more family friendly event by day, but



Our cover image: Scary Farm Gore-ing 20-s Courtesy of Knott's Berry Farm



Knott's Berry Farm Scary Farm



CarnEvil

after dark, the Shaquille O'Neal co-partnered hap's eerie elements come alive, including a boardwalk filled with ghoulish creatures, a Shipwreck Graveyard, Deadman's Wharf filled with deathly wanderers, and more. [shaqtoberfest.com](https://www.shaqtoberfest.com)

Haunted Hayride highlights the inherent creepiness of Griffith Park and takes it to new heights with its riveting ride through the darkness. Jack-o-lantern creatures, clowns, crazies and creeps are seen, heard and interacted with along the classic woody cruise. There's a few mazes and a stage show, too. [losangeleshauntedhayride.com](https://www.losangeleshauntedhayride.com)

Delusion from Thirteenth Floor Entertainment Group returns with a new theme called “Valley of Hallows” concerning a deadly cult known. Patrons walk the leader's estate and play the role of “deprogrammers” to help rescue its disturbed/possessed inhabitants. [entdelusion.com](https://www.entdelusion.com)

NoHo's horror theater company **Zombie Joe's Underground (JZU)** should be at the top of your freak list, especially if you're the type who likes to support local arts. ZJU's “Urban Death Tour of Terror” is more inventive than ever, if what we saw at the media preview is any indication. Dark and demented vignettes are presented at this adults-only dramatic show exploring themes of violence, mental anguish, and ghostly evil amidst a weird maze, and in the theater, where perspectives are skewed with bizarre lighting and sound effects. [zombiejoes.com](https://www.zombiejoes.com)

A creepily curated experience inside of an actual car wash in the O.C., **Tunnel of Terror** features an array of perform-

ers popping up throughout a demonic drive-through with special effects, lights and “terrifying ambiance” adding to the good clean (but decidedly menacing) fun. [tunnelofterroroc.com](https://www.tunnelofterroroc.com) - **LINA LECARO**

Scary Movies

Streaming services have turned into “screaming” services for the season, with Halloween-themed sections on Netflix, HBO Max, Disney+, Freeform and Hulu (Huluween). But some of us like to be with others watching on-screen thrills and chills. Angelenos have more to choose from than maybe anywhere else in the country. We are the city of make believe, after all.

Michael Myers is back in Halloween Ends, but let's face it, John Carpenter's classic will never really die. The South Pasadena home that served as filming site for the 1978 classic remains popular with locals and tourists alike, especially thanks to **SugarMynt Gallery** next door, which exists solely to celebrate the iconic horror movie. For October, they've got a multitude of Mike Meyers movies and a lot more killer entertainment. [sugarmynt.com/event-details/halloween-7](https://www.sugarmynt.com/event-details/halloween-7)

Scary Movie Month at Melrose Rooftop Theater features outdoor cinema utilizing wireless technology and individual headsets for films including Scream (both the 1996 and 2022 versions), Ghostbusters, Edward Scissorhands and American Psycho. [melroserooftoptheatre.com/movie-schedule](https://www.melroserooftoptheatre.com/movie-schedule)

Over at **Street Food Cinema**, they've got a Slasher Cinema schedule that celebrates the '80s this coming weekend

and the '90s next weekend at the Million Dollar Theater (two showings each) in Downtown. Screenings of Nightmare on Elm Street (Oct. 22) and Scream (Oct. 29) also will feature an underground haunted walk-through, photo opps, a costume contest, popcorn and a full cash bar (it's a 21+ event). [streetfoodcinema.com](https://www.streetfoodcinema.com)

Now through Halloween, **Rooftop Cinema Club's** various locations have some real ghoulish good flicks including: Interview with a Vampire (the original), Hocus Pocus, The Shining, Get Out, Silence of the Lambs, Beetlejuice, Cruella, The Ring, Donnie Darko, Bodies Bodies Bodies, Paranorman and the Rocky Horror Picture Show, just to name a few. [rooftopcinemaclub.com/los-angeles](https://www.rooftopcinemaclub.com/los-angeles)

Electric Dusk Drive-In has been doing its monthlong series called “Halloween Movie Madness,” and you can still catch some including old fashioned fiendish films such as The Nightmare Before Christmas, Casper, The Exorcist, Jeepers Creepers, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre and more. [electrickduskdrivein.com](https://www.electrickduskdrivein.com)

Cinespia is practically a Halloween tradition at this point, and they've been showing some great films this season. Unfortunately, the next two weekends (Carrie on the 22nd and Bram Stoker's Dracula on the 29th) are sold out. As of this writing, there still are tickets available for the Ace Hotel screening of Run Sweetheart Run this Thursday, Oct. 20, which also is the closing night for the **Screamfest** horror film festival. If you miss that, it'll be on Prime Video on Oct. 28. [cinespia.org](https://www.cinespia.org) - **LINA LECARO**

Expanding the definition of horror to include pitch-black surrealism, psychological torment in suburbia, haunting dark comedy, undisputed champions of abject fear-inducing hellscape, creeped-out kitsch, and movies with surprise endings we already know that don't make them any less affecting, the **Hocus-Focus Film Festival at Alex Theater's** three-night lineup of features includes Donnie Darko (2001), Hellboy (2004), The Sixth Sense (1999), The Shining (1980), Beetlejuice (1988), The Omen (1976), and Nightmare on Elm Street (1984). Before each screening, the curators share a new student-made horror short inspired by these formative giants of the genre. [alextheatre.org/event/hocus-focus-film-festival](https://www.alextheatre.org/event/hocus-focus-film-festival) - **SHANA NYS DAMBROT**

More Freaky Fun

FORT LA Witch Houses Trail. Basically Star Maps but for architecture history, Friends of Residential Architecture (FORT LA) curates themed self-guided architecture trails all over the city, and their new one is the third iteration of their popular and appropriately seasonal Witch Houses: Something Wicked This Way Comes, guest curated by novelist



and actor Amber Benson, whose most recent work is the spooky *Witches of Echo Park* trilogy of novels. In her former life, Benson spent three seasons as the witch Tara Maclay on the television show *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*, and she still loves walking alone in dark alleys and otherwise tempting fate. She's selected a tour of some of the most bone-chilling and otherworldly houses in Los Angeles — including the gargoyle-bedecked Weatherwolde Castle and Viking-themed Wiggins House in Tujunga, the Snow White Cottages in Atwater, the storybook Spadena House in Beverly Hills, and more — as well as short story pairings to get you in the scary moods. fortla.org — **SHANA NYS DAMBROT**

“WITCH!” is an original immersive theater event based on the *Pendle Witch Trials of 1612*. Townspeople descend into madness as witch fever spreads and you become the accused. The production, from Downtown Repertory Theater Company, warns that you might get separated from the people you came with as you meet the “witches” and the “inquisitors” walking through a haunted forest and cemetery to the Mountain View Mausoleum and abandoned chapel. This is the kind of Halloween that makes L.A. great. www.eventbrite.com/e/witch-tickets-392221744797?aff=ebditotimeout&c

ity=LosAngelesUS — **LINA LECARO**

Frankenstein with Live Orchestra at the Theater at Ace Hotel. The annual Halloween mashup of film and opera at the Theater at Ace Hotel returns with the Boris Karloff macabre classic on the big screen, inhabiting the timeless gothic parable of mad genius, ambition, hubris, human frailty, and fear of the unknown. As shocking as the film might be, the real shocker is that the 1931 masterpiece was originally released without a musical score — a situation composer Michael Shapiro has rectified with the new original soundtrack which will accompany the screenings. Shapiro himself will conduct his evocative score, performed live by the LA Opera Orchestra in the perfect setting of the Ace Hotel's equally classic theater. laopera.org — **SHANA NYS DAMBROT**

Atlas Obscura: How to Read a Gravestone (Virtual). Some of the oldest and most intriguing, artistic, unique graveyards in America are ready to give up their secrets. Stories in the *Stones: How to Read a Gravestone With Dr. Elise M. Ciregna* is a four-part seminar fittingly beginning Halloween weekend, focused on the emblems and codes of American cemetery traditions. A combination of research and field study, merging history with cultural trends, regional traditions, multicultural melding and displacement, religion, fashion, language, geology and aesthetic conventions from the garden bed to the mausoleum, this in-depth course covers a different era of US history, each week going back to the arrival of the first European colonists and the various practices they brought with them. atlasobscura.com/experiences/gravestone-reading-online-course. — **SHANA NYS DAMBROT**

See more Halloween events including our Nightlife Picks on LAWeekly.com 📍

CANNABIS

CALIFORNIA DOJ REBRANDS ITS BIGGEST POT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

After 40 years, the CA Department of Justice and partner agencies are moving on from the CAMP program to the new Effort to Prevent Illicit Cannabis

BY: JIMI DEVINE



Last week, California Attorney General Rob Bonta announced California was moving on from the 40-year-old Campaign Against Marijuana Planting to the new expanded Effort to Prevent Illicit Cannabis (EPIC).

The move came almost exactly a year after Bonta announced he would be commissioning a six-month review of the CAMP program. His goals at the time were to ensure resources were being targeted at the environmental, labor, and economic impacts of illegal cultivation. The attorney general's office noted that since 1983, the 13-week annual CAMP program eradicated more than 33 million illegal cannabis plants.

In its final season, CAMP led to the eradication of nearly 1 million cannabis plants and the seizure of more than 200,000 pounds of processed cannabis during 449 operations across 26 counties. Bonta valued the total haul of the plants

taken this year at about \$1 billion, which breaks down to \$1,000 a plant. And even if the 200,000 pounds were only worth \$200 a piece in the most brutal cannabis marketplace in history for farmers currently taking place, that's still \$40 million.

This year's CAMP actions also led to the seizure of 184 firearms and the removal of 60,000 pounds of cultivation infrastructure.

Beginning this fall, EPIC becomes the state's biggest cannabis enforcement program and the enforcement model transitions to a year-round task force, as opposed to one only operating at the heart of the growing season and the Harvest. To help put the size of the program into perspective, Bonta said the DOJ will be contributing five times as much staff to EPIC as it did to CAMP.

“California has the largest safe, legal, and regulated cannabis market in the world, but unfortunately illegal and unlicensed grows continue to proliferate,”

Bonta told a press conference while announcing EPIC. “The California Department of Justice’s CAMP task force works tirelessly each year to eradicate illegal grows and reclaim our public lands, but shutting down these grows is no longer enough.”

Bonta explained that the CAMP program comes from an era when all cannabis cultivation was illegal and the years since have given way to both recreational and medical markets. Bonta himself was a fan of measured enforcement, as the once underground marketplace got its footing in the newly regulated market during his time as the assembly’s cannabis champion.

While noting the importance of enforcement, he said he wished his former peers at the state capital had endorsed the enforcement strategies that would have seen the scrutiny on permit holders increase year after year as the market stabilized and they got their feet under them.

“With the transition to EPIC, we’re taking the next step and building out our efforts to address the environmental and economic harms and labor exploitation associated with this underground market,” Bonta said. “I want to thank all our local, state and federal partners for their long-standing collaboration on CAMP and ongoing commitment to tackle this problem through the EPIC task force.”

One thing about the transition to EPIC is the fact the feds are participating in a program with the stated goal of helping to stabilize the California recreational market, by destabilizing the illicit one. That destabilization of the underground cannabis market is the program’s third goal, after the public safety situation around illicit mega grows and people take advantage of migrant labor in nefarious ways.

Karen Mouritsen, California state director for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), stuck to the environmental aspects of EPIC and CAMP when she spoke after Bonta last week.

“Illegal cultivation of marijuana on public lands continues to be a major problem for California. These illegal operations have a devastating impact on our environment, and the health and safety of communities and public land users,” said Mouritsen. “The BLM is proud to be a part of CAMP’s federal, state and local law enforcement partnership and its mission to protect our public lands and maintain public safety.”

In 2022, CAMP operations were conducted in the following 26 counties:

Mendocino: 18 sites, 190,018 plants eradicated

Riverside: 77 sites, 159,287 plants eradicated

San Bernardino: 41 sites, 138,815 plants eradicated

Lake: 51 sites, 97,677 plants eradicated

Kern: 53 sites, 77,837 plants eradicated

Siskiyou: 52 sites: 68,130 plants eradicated

Trinity: 22 sites, 46,632 plants eradicated

Monterey: 11 sites, 37,247 plants eradicated

Tulare: 30 sites, 27,020 plants eradicated

Shasta: 19 sites, 26,413 plants eradicated

San Benito: 1 site, 24,295 plants eradicated

Los Angeles: 20 sites, 23,492 plants eradicated

Sacramento: 4 sites, 17,973 plants eradicated

Fresno: 19 sites, 11,064 plants eradicated

Madera: 14 sites, 8,757 plants eradicated

Nevada: 2 sites, 8,279 plants eradicated

Mariposa: 11 sites, 5,761 plants eradicated

Ventura: 1 site, 2,370 plants eradicated

San Diego: 2 sites, 1,510 plants eradicated

Sonoma: 1 site, 1,407 plants eradicated

Santa Barbara: reconnaissance only

Santa Cruz: reconnaissance only

Santa Clara: reconnaissance only

Tuolumne: reconnaissance only

Humboldt: reconnaissance only

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IT

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