

## The Measured and Perceived Impact of Marijuana Production and Commerce on Rural Economies, Public Utilities, and Quality of Life

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The marijuana industry has had a substantial impact on rural Oklahoma since the sale and use of medicinal cannabis products were legalized in 2018. Loose regulations on medicinal marijuana production quickly made the state a hotspot for production, with many growing operations being established in rural areas of the state. Dispensaries are also now a common site in most rural towns. There is still, however, little conclusive information on the impacts of marijuana production on rural communities—communities that, due to their size, are especially sensitive to new industries. Without this information, rural communities may not have the full picture of the benefits and drawbacks of the industry at the community level. Likewise, regulators may not have the information they need to provide the structure that will minimize the negatives while also encouraging the positives of the industry. This project seeks to understand and document the measured and perceived impacts of marijuana production on rural economies, utilities, and quality of life.