SGI receives insurance claim for stolen pot

Jana Pruden

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REGINA -- Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) has received a claim for a supply of marijuana stolen from a Regina resident's home.

The claim may be the first of its kind since new rules governing the use of medical marijuana came into effect last summer.

"If you have home insurance and it's a medical supply, there would be coverage," said SGI spokesperson Earl Cameron.

"It's no different than prescription drugs. Legal property is covered and illegal property is not."

There are about 600 approved marijuana users around the country, who buy the plant or seeds from Health Canada. The federal government started selling the drug last July at a much lower price than is available on the street.

The replacement cost of the stolen marijuana, and whether the claimant would be paid out in cash or kind, depends on the individual's insurance policy, Cameron said. As with all marijuana for medical use, the replacement drugs would have to be bought through Health Canada.

Dave MacLean, provincial director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, says his organization takes no issue with SGI covering a licensed user's supply.

"If it's a prescribed drug, technically there's no difference between that and any other prescription drug," he said. "An insurance claim is an insurance claim."

But Marcus Davies, communications director for the Saskatchewan Medical Association, says the theft proves what his agency has been saying for a long time.

"This actually bears out one of the issues we raised in the first place, the dangers of placing an illegal substance in the hands of a physician or at a physician's office," said Davies. "Providing a substance that there is a large black market demand for is creating a target."