

# Suspected 'hash oil' lab explodes in Malibu home; 1 man burned

By Jason Wells

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A suspected drug lab at a home in Malibu caught fire and exploded Tuesday, injuring one person who had to be transported to the hospital via helicopter, authorities said.

Firefighters responded to the home in the 1200 block of Encinal Canyon Road shortly before 6:15 p.m. to find it fully engulfed in flames, according to the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

Authorities later discovered the substance “honey oil” -- a type of marijuana oil -- at the residence, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Sgt. Fray Lupian told KTLA-TV.

A 25-year-old man who was burned in the explosion and ensuing fire was airlifted to Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center to be treated for his injuries, authorities said.

The man, who was not immediately identified, would likely be arrested on drug-related charges after recovering, Lupian said.

A hazardous materials crew was still at the scene shortly before 2 a.m. Wednesday, according to the fire department.

“Butane honey oil,” also called “wax,” has been a growing trend in the marijuana market, officials said. Dabs of it can be vaporized and inhaled without the smoke and pungent odor of marijuana, an act called “dabbing.” The method produces a stronger high even among those who have strong tolerance to cannabis.

The widespread popularity of the waxy substance has led many to attempt the extraction method, often resulting in injuries.

Two men suspected of operating what authorities said was a “butane honey oil extraction laboratory,” in which marijuana is turned into the “hash oil,” were burned in a similar explosion last month in the city of Commerce.

One of several butane bottles located inside the home may have exploded and caused the fire, authorities said.

In January, several apartment units in El Cajon were damaged after what authorities said was a hash oil explosion. Two men who were allegedly operating the hash oil laboratory were severely burned in the incident.

Earlier this month in Glendale, police reported that they busted a hash oil operation, saying that the potential for a large explosion at the lab was "huge."