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Police raid £130,000 drugs factory

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A PSNI officer with cannabis estimated at a value of £135,000 seized at a house in Coleraine. A man will appear in court today in connection with the haul.

A man in his 40s was due in court today after police busted a substantial cannabis factory in Co Londonderry.

Up to 269 cannabis plants and cultivation equipment worth an estimated £130,000 were seized during the raid at a property in the Waterside area of Coleraine on Thursday.

The man was expected to face charges of cannabis cultivation, possession of class B drugs, possession of class B drugs with intent to supply and abstracting electricity when he appeared at Ballymena Magistrate's Court.

Police said that a number of first-floor bedrooms in the semi-detached house had been converted into cultivation rooms with the windows taped over to block out light. Heat lamps, and a watering system had also been installed and a blanket was used to conceal the stairs leading to the make-shift factory.

The raid was carried out by officers from the PSNI's drugs squad and Coleraine DCU's tactical crime team.

PSNI Inspector Andrew Lemon said the haul would deal a significant blow to the local drugs trade: "This is a significant seizure, and will have a considerable impact in the trade in illegal drugs," he said.

Meanwhile last month police in Coleraine issued a warning about a potentially lethal batch of Ecstasy tablets which were being peddled in the town.

Two men presented themselves to medics at the Causeway Hospital in Coleraine and allegedly admitted taking rocket marked 'e-tabs' the previous night. Inspector Lemon urged anyone with information regarding the misuse of controlled drugs to contact police on 0845 600 8000 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.