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Fezell tests turn up no evidence of drugs

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Results of drug tests taken by District Attorney Vic Fezell Friday showed no presence of marijuana, cocaine or amphetamines.

Fezell underwent the tests after a report of items seized by the FBI during a search of his home following his arrest on federal racketeering charges became

public Thursday.

According to a report filed by the FBI in the U.S. district clerk's office in Austin, three syringes and a water pipe that contained marijuana were found in Fezell's home. A face mask was attached to the water pipe with a rubber hose.

The drug test was authorized by Bob Barron, director of McLennan County's adult probation department, and paid for by Fezell.

Barron said Friday he is satisfied that the urine used in the tests was taken from Fezell and that the tests were negative.

"The whole thing was so ridiculous. I wanted to prove I've nothing to hide," Fezell said Friday. "Marijuana stays in your system for up to six weeks."

Fezell said the water pipe was given to him by a former neighbor, E.B. Hawthorne, who found the pipe in his front yard. Hawthorne died in August.

Joyce Burleson, a bookkeeper for Dr. R.B. Kleiman, said Friday she remembered Hawthorne telling her about giving the pipe to Fezell.

Ms. Burleson said Hawthorne was a patient of Kleiman's, "and about three years ago, he was fussing about some dopers having a party and throwing stuff in his yard. He said it made him mad and he took it over to the DA."

Fezell said he forgot about the pipe.

"If I was smoking dope, don't you think I would have known it was there?" he said.

Although the FBI report says the pipe contained marijuana, Fezell said he remembers only a trace in the pipe.

"I would have been scared to death if there was a larger amount of marijuana in there," he said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jan Patterson declined to say how much marijuana was found in the pipe.

Fezell's attorney, Gary Richardson, said, "It isn't unusual at all for someone in law enforcement to have a collection or have something of that nature."

Fezell's drug use as a teenager became a campaign issue during October 1982 when Fezell first ran for district attorney.

His opponent, Waco attorney Paul Gartner, ran advertisements in the *Tribune-Herald* saying Fezell had admitted using marijuana and LSD.

Fezell said he had "experimented" with marijuana and what he was told was LSD when was 14.

Gartner again opposes Fezell in the November general election, but he has declined to comment about the items found in Fezell's home.