

# SafetyCanada

THE MEMBER NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADA SAFETY COUNCIL

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## Driving on Marijuana Will Leave You High and Dry

Drinking and driving is widely acknowledged as being risky, dangerous, irresponsible and potentially fatal. This stigma against alcohol behind the wheel has been rapidly building in public sentiment and is far from the attitude that once surrounded the combination many years ago.

It's time to do the same with marijuana and driving.

A 2016 survey by State Farm revealed that one out of four survey respondents don't believe or don't know that smoking marijuana and driving can be as bad as drinking and driving. And yet, the statistics bear out the fact that marijuana-impaired driving leaves behind a trail of devastation. Research by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation shows that marijuana is the second most commonly detected substance among driver fatalities in traffic crashes – the first, of course, being alcohol.

With the Canadian government officially tabling legislation to legalize marijuana in July 2018, the timing is even more critical that drivers understand the inherent risks attached to smoking and driving. These include the following:

- Slower reaction time. This can be especially troubling if you're required to make a split-second decision and you can't react quickly enough.
- Altered time perception. This could result in sitting at a green traffic light for too long, or grow impatient at a red light and blow past it.
- Multiplicative effect on other drugs. If you've had a drink or two prior to getting behind the wheel, those effects are magnified. Drivers who have smoked tend to compensate by driving slower and leaving more following space. These benefits disappear when the driver has also had a few drinks, as they feel less impaired than they are.

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## President's Perspective

Springtime is officially in full swing, and that means it's just about road trip season. Whether you're traveling to Tofino, B.C. or St. John's, N.L., or out of the country entirely, springtime travel brings its own unique set of safety challenges and considerations.

I've been on my fair share of road trips in the past and trust me, I know how tempting it is to throw your bags in the back and head off on an adventure. But don't forget – your bags are in the backseat. Don't let safety take a back seat, too.

It is important to plan ahead. Where are you going? Which roads do you plan on taking? Are there any tollbooths? Is any portion of the drive under construction? Preparation will reduce the stress and allow you to leave enough time to get to your destination safely.

It's also a good idea to plan a few alternate routes in case something unpredictable makes your initial route not possible. In the event that the unexpected does happen, remember that a calm attitude will serve you much better than agitation and irritation.

Sobriety on the road is an absolute must. Don't drive if you drink, have been using drugs, or are fatigued. Always maintain a clear mind when be-

hind the wheel, which will allow you to keep your focus on the road where it belongs.

The same holds true for distraction. Taking a road trip, whether for a weekend or a more prolonged time, is no excuse to drive distracted or press your luck with distracted driving legislation.

Lastly, courtesy on the road is critical. If you encounter somebody driving aggressively, cutting in and out of traffic, trying to force his or her way in at a merge, don't take it personally. Remain calm. You'll get where you need to be sooner or later, and there are no advantages to engaging with an aggressive driver. If you feel threatened, call the police.

Have a safe and pleasant road trip! Take the opportunity to make memories with friends and family.

*Safety, it's an attitude!*

Jack Smith, President





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There's some debate about whether driving while high is safer than driving drunk. In the Canada Safety Council's opinion, that's akin to saying that pinching yourself is safer than punching yourself.

While the truth of the initial statement continues to be unsure, why risk anything that impairs your judgment? You're operating a heavy machine capable of reaching high speeds while surrounded by other road users in similar machines.

Human life is fragile and, while safety measures have come a long way toward making driving as safe as possible, there's no safety remedy against poor decisions.

Be smart. Make the right decision. If you've been smoking marijuana, stay home. Watch Netflix. Have a snack. Listen to music.

Don't get in the car and endanger your own life, as well as those of everyone around you. It's just not worth it.

## Looking Ahead

National Farm Safety Week marked the beginning of our campaign season for 2017, running from March 14 — 20. This year's campaign focused on safety around livestock, including best practices to ensure that cattle and horses feel comfortable and at ease with your actions.

The campaign season continues in May with two campaigns. Firstly, **National Summer Safety Week** is being held from May 1 — 7, and the primary focus this year will continue to be drowning prevention. The Lifesaving Society of Canada has continued to do excellent research into this field, and the statistics continue to bear out the fact that drowning fatalities are entirely preventable.

The next campaign will follow shortly, as **National Road Safety Week** will be taking place from May 16 — 22. This year, in partnership with State Farm Canada, the Canada Safety Council will be taking a look at distracted driving. The issue has continually been an important one as far as road fatalities go. Enforcement isn't always the easiest solution, especially not with a problem as rampant as texting and driving. We need to change attitudes before we change laws.





## Maintaining a Healthy Home for Seniors

(NC) As we age, our immune systems become less effective at fighting disease, which can increase our risk of developing health complications. Older people are more likely to develop heart or respiratory illnesses and are more susceptible to the potential health impacts from a variety of exposures in our day-to-day lives.

The following simple steps can help you stay healthy as you age:

- During hot summer months, keep your home cool and stay hydrated. It can be dangerous if it gets too hot inside your home, especially if you have existing medical conditions such as heart or kidney problems, breathing difficulties or hypertension. Drink plenty of cool liquids before you start to feel thirsty, and eat more fruits and vegetables. Arrange for visits by family members or friends during very hot days, in case you need assistance.
- Improve air quality in your home by having your home tested for radon, a radioactive gas that is produced naturally by the breakdown of uranium in the ground. It enters homes through cracks and gaps in floors, walls, windows and doors and is in every home in Canada at varying levels. Indoor exposure to radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in Canada after smoking.
- Allow fresh air into the house regularly

unless it is very hot or smoggy outside, in which case using air conditioning is recommended.

- Remember to always use exhaust fans when cooking and showering to reduce the build-up of moisture and indoor air pollutants.
- Use household chemicals safely – read and follow all instructions, store chemicals properly when not in use, and dispose of household hazardous waste products safely.
- Wash re-useable grocery bags frequently with hot, soapy water, especially if they have been used for raw meat, poultry, fish or seafood.
- Make sure you have a working carbon monoxide detector certified by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). Follow the manufacturer’s suggestions for installation, testing, use and replacement. The most important place to install a detector is in the hallways, outside of sleeping areas.

Health Canada has produced a simple, easy-to-read Environmental Health Guide for Seniors at Home that can be ordered by calling 1-800-O-Canada or by visiting [www.canada.ca/health](http://www.canada.ca/health). This guide is a useful resource on how to stay healthy at home.

## De-clutter Your Brain About Spring Cleaning

(NC) We all love a clean, tidy house, but did you know that some of the cleaning products we use every day could be exposing us to harmful substances? In fact, improperly used or stored household and automotive chemical products are among the top products responsible for injuries and deaths in children under the age of five.

Even a small amount of a chemical product can be harmful to a child. Bad tastes and odours often do not keep children away from household chemical products.

- Many of us use household chemical products in and around our homes and garages. These include cleaning liquids and powders (such as laundry and dishwasher pods), polishes, drain cleaners, paint thinners and windshield washer fluids. All these products can be dangerous if not handled or stored properly.

- Health Canada reminds everyone to use household chemicals safely by following this simple four-step process:

1. Read and understand the label before you buy or use a household chemical product. Carefully follow the directions, paying close attention to hazard symbols and

cautionary statements.

2. Use household chemical products carefully. Never mix household chemicals together. Check that child-resistant closures are working properly, but remember that child-resistant doesn't mean childproof. Make sure containers are closed when they're put down or not being used. Teach your children to recognize the hazard symbols and know what they mean.

3. Store household chemical products safely in their original containers and make sure all safety information is readable. Keep all household chemical products safely locked away where children cannot see or reach them. Keep flammable products in a separate building if available, such as a shed, or store according to label instructions.

4. Dispose of left-over household chemical products safely. Check with your city or town for safe disposal guidelines. Buy only what you need and never bury or burn household chemical containers or pour contents down the drain. Never reuse empty chemical containers.

You can find more safety tips for parents and kids online at [Canada.ca/health](http://Canada.ca/health)



## Stay Safe on the Water this Summer

(NC) Enjoy a summer on the water with friends and family by following these tips to keep people and Canadian waterways safe.

**Report signs of trouble.** Canadian waterways are essential for leisure, travel and the economy. It's important to know when something's wrong so that the Canadian Coast Guard can step in to help. Oil slicks, diesel and other toxic spills are all obvious signs of trouble. Persistent water pollution can slowly endanger wildlife.

**Help keep our waters clean.** If you have a boat, you have a responsibility to ensure that no oil and other hazardous products, including sewage, spill into the waters. Avoid any spills, no matter how small, because they affect the environment. Properly remove and dispose of an old boat you no longer need. This could include taking the boat to a boat retailer, a recycle depot or a landfill, depending on what

is available where you live. Help protect the environment by reporting any signs of marine pollution or abandoned boats and wrecks. As part of the Oceans Protection Plan, the Government of Canada will improve marine safety, protect Canada's marine environment and introduce new measures to prohibit owners from abandoning their boats in our waters.



**Take weather precautions.** If heading out on the water, check weather reports to make sure you're not taken by surprise by changing weather conditions.

**Keep emergency numbers on hand.** Make sure to have a marine radio on board set to channel 16. In case of an emergency, dial \*16 on your mobile device, which will connect you with the closest Canadian Coast Guard Marine Communications and Traffic Services centre. Find your local Canadian Coast Guard phone number at [www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/emergency-numbers-hub](http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/emergency-numbers-hub).



### Safety Training Online

*Want to go back to school without leaving home?  
Visit [www.canadasafetycouncil.org/training](http://www.canadasafetycouncil.org/training)  
to sign up for online safety training! Courses include OH&S topics,  
defensive driving, babysitters training, and home alone safety.*



## Popular on Social Media



**CanadaSafetyCouncil**  
@CanadaSafetyCSC

Did you know that more than half of serious farming injuries happen when the victim is working alone?  
[canadasafetycouncil.org/workplace-safe...](http://canadasafetycouncil.org/workplace-safe...)

8:16am · 21 Feb 2017 · TweetDeck



**CanadaSafetyCouncil**  
@CanadaSafetyCSC

An important reminder, today and always: marijuana and driving don't mix.  
[canadasafetycouncil.org/campaigns/its-...](http://canadasafetycouncil.org/campaigns/its-...)



1:12pm · 20 Apr 2017 · TweetDeck

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The Medical Data Carrier is a unique, bilingual, medical information system that provides critical lifesaving data about the wearer as well as crucial family contact information in the event of an emergency.


"We're really excited to be able to add such a simple and effective safety tool to our rider kits," said Jackie Barbe, Traffic Safety Program Coordinator at the Canada Safety Council. "Rider safety is always our number one priority, whether they're getting on a motorcycle for the first time or gaining experience post-course. Being able to provide useful information to first responders in case a rider gets injured after course completion definitely falls into that category."

The Medical Data Carrier is always attached to the left side of the motorcycle helmet. Information as to the rider's identity and medical history including such things as allergies, medications, blood type and pre-existing medical conditions will assist trained first responders to expedite the crucial triage stage of an injured motorcyclist's care. A warning on the outside of the carrier, written in bold, warns Good Samaritan responders to leave helmet removal to those trained in the proper technique. Improper removal can result in collateral injury, paralysis or worse.

"The Canada Safety Council have once again raised the bar on rider safety," stated Steve Reed, President of Medical Data Carrier IM Inc. "We are so pleased to have been selected by the CSC to provide students registered in the Gearing Up motorcycle program with our emergency preparedness solution."

Since 1974 the Canada Safety Council has been the leader in the development of professional, accredited motorcycle rider training programs for Canadians. The flagship rider training program is Gearing Up, the acknowledged national benchmark for novice rider training. It is offered through a national network of provincial and local organizations, and is recognized by the motorcycle industry, federal and provincial governments, insurers and private organizations across Canada.

For more information and course locations visit our Rider Training site at [www.ridertraining.org](http://www.ridertraining.org)



**Gearing Up – Motorcycle Rider Training – Motorcycle Rider Training**

Since 1974 the Canada Safety Council has been the leader in the development of professional,...

RIDERTRAINING.ORG

*Do you have a safety story, tip or pet-peeve to share?  
Email [media@safety-council.org](mailto:media@safety-council.org), tweet us @CanadaSafetyCSC or send us a post or a message on our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/canada.safety>.*



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