



Canadian Road Safety News Digest

A semi-monthly compilation of national, provincial and local news stories on road safety

For the period December 1st to 15th, 2014

More than 140,000 recalled GM vehicles still on the road: Transport Canada

December 12, 2014, Financial Post (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

Transport Canada says there are still 140,782 General Motors vehicles with a potentially deadly defect driving on Canadian roads.

Despite “numerous notification efforts,” including a safety advisory from the federal government in October, 38.2% of the Canadian vehicles that have been recalled over an ignition-switch defect have not been fixed, the agency said Friday. Transport Canada urged owners of the affected GM vehicles to take them into dealerships for repairs as soon as possible.

GM has recalled more than 30 million vehicles in North America over the defect, which can cause the vehicle to stall and disable its airbags. It has been linked to 36 deaths so far.

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No drunk drivers to be found: Ottawa police sweep second to come up empty

December 12, 2014, Ottawa Citizen (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

Not that police are complaining, but for the second week in a row, police forces on a big anti-drunk driving highway blitz came away without a single arrest...

...This comes on the heels of last week’s operation when more than 800 drivers were pulled over on the Quebec side, without a single drinking-and-driving charge. The fact that no one was caught drinking and driving may indicate that Ottawa residents are taking the issue more seriously than they have in the past.

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How police detect drivers under the influence of drugs

December 10, 2014, Metroland Media Group (ORILLIA, ONTARIO)

It's an annual seasonal ritual, arriving just as certainly as Santa Claus and Christmas trees—police across the country launch their annual holiday RIDE campaigns, vowing to take impaired drivers off the roads.

And while much of the discussion focuses on drunk drivers, the police also have other offenders in their sights: people getting behind the wheel while they're impaired by drugs.

"That's on the forefront of our priorities," said Sergeant Kerry Schmidt of the Ontario Provincial Police. "There's been a big increase in impaired by drugs (charges) this year compared to last year."

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IBC sponsors Canadian Women's Hockey League for the 2014-15 season

December 9, 2014, Canada Newswire (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

Drive Now. Text Later. Live Longer. This is one of several road safety messages that Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) will deliver to women's hockey fans across Canada as a new lead sponsor of the Canadian Women's Hockey League (CWHL).

As part of the CWHL sponsorship, IBC will educate the public on road safety issues and on how to avoid becoming a victim of auto insurance fraud. A 30-second TV spot featuring a "Don't text while driving" message will launch on Sportsnet during CWHL's first All-Star Game on December 13.

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Alberta transportation minister says it's time to 'start talking about' boosting distracted driving penalties

December 8, 2014, Metro (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

Alberta's transportation minister tapped the brakes before endorsing a push by his Tory colleague to roll out stiffer penalties for distracted drivers, but said he was keen to discuss the matter further.

Calgary-East MLA Moe Amery introduced Bill 204 last week in response to what he described as frequent complaints from constituents about dangerous activities behind the wheel.

The bill, if approved, would see fines for distracted driving ramped up to \$250 from \$172 and guilty motorists would also be slapped with three demerits.

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Bill aims to slap distracted Alberta drivers with demerits, stiffer fines

December 7, 2014, Metro (CALGARY, ALBERTA)

Responding to persistent calls from his constituents, a Calgary MLA is hoping to shift gears in the distracted driving fight with a bill that would drive up fines and tack on demerits for guilty motorists.

And Moe Amery, Tory party member and representative for Calgary-East, says he has support from government caucus for the proposed Bill 204, which was officially introduced in the Alberta legislature last week.

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Ignition interlock devices growing in popularity to discourage drunk driving

December 6, 2014, Toronto Sun (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

In order to start the car, you need to blow clean.

It's called an ignition interlock and it's connected to the vehicle, detects blood-alcohol concentration over a preset limit of 0.02 (20 mg of alcohol per 100 ml of blood) and the car won't start if you blow over....

...The interlock is a provincially-mandated alcohol screening device installed in vehicles for those convicted of impaired driving under the Criminal Code of Canada or suspended for registering a blood alcohol concentration of 0.05 to 0.08 three or more times in a five-year period.

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RCMP checkstops throughout Alberta on Friday, December 5th

December 5, 2014, www.rcmp.gc.ca (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

Today, the RCMP will conduct roadside checkstops in local detachment areas and on highways throughout Alberta. The checkstop blitz is part of a Canada-wide RCMP enforcement campaign aimed at keeping and taking impaired drivers off the roads. RCMP Drug Recognition Experts (DRE) will participate in the CheckStops. These officers are trained to identify and assess the impairment of drivers who are under the influence of prescription and illegal drugs.

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CRTC supports the "Leave the Phone Alone" road safety awareness campaign

December 4, 2014, Canada Newswire (OTTAWA, ONTARIO & GATINEAU, QUEBEC)

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) today announced its support for the "Leave the Phone Alone" road safety awareness campaign initiated by the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA).

The CRTC urges Canadians to use their mobile devices responsibly and to avoid talking on the phone, texting or checking messages on social media networks while driving.

According to the CCMTA, drivers who use hand-held devices when they are behind the wheel are four times more likely to be involved in an accident serious enough to cause injury, and in 80% of collisions, the driver had looked away from the road three seconds prior to the crash.

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CAA-Quebec estimates the financial impact of a first offence for impaired driving at nearly \$7,000

December 4, 2014, Canada Newswire (QUEBEC CITY, QUEBEC)

The Holiday season is an appropriate time to remind motorists of the significant financial consequences of a first-time conviction for impaired driving. The direct and indirect costs to the offender are nearly \$7,000—and that's just in the first year following the conviction. Added to that financial burden are other major disadvantages, for example if the offender wants to travel to the United States.

CAA-Quebec's detailed table illustrating the financial impacts of an initial impaired-driving conviction provides much food for thought.

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Slow Down Move Over regulation protects roadside workers

December 4, 2014, Government of B.C. (VICTORIA, B.C.)

The B.C. government is making a Motor Vehicle Act regulation change to simplify the Slow Down Move Over rule, making it safer for roadside workers.

Currently, the Slow Down Move Over regulation requires drivers to reduce speed and, if on a multi-lane road, move over to another lane when passing stopped vehicles with a flashing light, which are considered “official vehicles”. These include: police, fire, ambulance, tow trucks, Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement vehicles, park rangers and conservation officers.

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BC Coroners Service urges pedestrian safety

December 3, 2014, Vancouver Observer (VANCOUVER, B.C.)

The BC Coroners Service is urging both pedestrians and motorists to take extra care in the wake of five deaths of elderly pedestrians at intersections during the past 11 days.

In four of the five cases, the pedestrians - who ranged in age from 73 to 87 years - were struck by vehicles, which were making left-hand turns, according to a press release. (In the fifth case, the vehicle was going straight through the intersection.) Two of the incidents took place in Vancouver, and one each in New Westminster, Kelowna and Oliver.

The deaths are in line with a recent review by the BC Coroners Service of 142 fatal pedestrian incidents, which occurred from 2010 through 2012. The review showed that persons over the age of 70 were at more than double the risk of dying in a pedestrian incident than those in any other age group. It also showed that in cases where pedestrians

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Alberta seniors protest mandatory tests for drivers, but minister won't change law

December 3, 2014, Calgary Herald (CALGARY, ALBERTA)

Alberta seniors have taken their protest against mandatory cognitive testing for 75-year-old drivers to the legislature, but the province's transportation minister says he won't change the rules.

Wayne Drysdale said Wednesday he understands the concerns seniors have about losing their licences, but he has to make sure Alberta roads are safe.

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What can be done to improve safety on Alberta's highways and roads?

December 3, 2014, CTV News (CALGARY, ALBERTA)

The provincial government is asking Albertans to contribute to the discussion on ways to reduce fatalities and improve safety on Alberta's roads and highways. Officials with Alberta Transportation are considering a number of changes to the province's Traffic Safety Act and the ministry has created an online public survey to gather citizen feedback on the proposed updates.

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Toronto Police Service recognized for contributions to school safety

December 3, 2014, Canada Newswire (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

Ensuring the safety of our children on our roads is an important role shared by traffic safety advocates, police partners and community leaders.

Each year for the past 17 years, CAA South Central Ontario (CAA SCO) has recognized one police service which stands out for its valuable contributions to keeping elementary school students safe.

This year's recipient of CAA's School Safety Patrol Program Achievement Award is Toronto Police Service. The annual award is given to a police service which lends exceptional support to the CAA School Safety Patrol (SSP) program.

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Impaired driving charges: police wrestle with 'exacting steps' - Quarter of all cases in northeastern Ontario last year were dismissed, acquitted, stayed or withdrawn

December 1, 2014, CBC News (SUDBURY, ONTARIO)

A provincial police officer says proving impaired driving cases is increasingly difficult and time-consuming.

“There are twelve specific steps we must prove before we can even lay a charge in impaired ... and each one must be proved perfectly,” said OPP Inspector Mark Andrews.

“Unfortunately, because of this, the court procedure has become more a test of process than an actual test of whether that person's impaired or not.”

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National survey finds more than one-third of all drivers admit to breaking distracted driving laws within the last week

December 1, 2014, The Globe and Mail (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

A new TELUS survey has found that 36 per cent of Canadian drivers admitted to illegally using their smartphones while driving. The survey also found that while 70 per cent of Canadian passengers are uncomfortable with drivers using their smartphone behind the wheel, nearly a quarter of them don't speak up. This National Safe Driving Week (December 1-7), TELUS is launching the "Thumbs Up. Phones Down." campaign to increase awareness of distracted driving and encourage Canadian drivers to focus on the road while they are behind the wheel.

According to the Ontario Provincial Police, distracted driving now kills more people than drunk driving and speeding combined. It is also the second-leading cause of car crashes in B.C. (ICBC). The survey, conducted by TELUS via Google Insights, provided additional data around Canadians' distracted driving behaviour:

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Canadian Events & Conferences in 2014 & 2015

Call for Nominations

TAC Technical Excellence Awards

Submission Deadline: February 13, 2015

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25th CARSP Conference (formerly Canadian Multidisciplinary Road Safety Conference or CMRSC).

Theme: Road Safety: The Road Ahead

Delta Ottawa City Centre

Ottawa, Ontario

May 27 - 30, 2015

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Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers (CITE) 2015 Conference

Theme: Supporting a Healthy Vibrant
Community

Regina, Saskatchewan

June 7-10, 2015

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CCMTA Annual Meeting

Yukon Convention Centre

Whitehorse, Yukon

June 16-19, 2015

[Learn more...](#)

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If you are aware of road safety news items or upcoming conferences that should be included in this Safety News Digest, please forward them to info@carsp.ca

