



Canadian Road Safety News Digest

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

For the period February 1st to 15th, 2015

Deaths on Manitoba highways hit 30-year low in 2014, following trend

February 13, 2015, Winnipeg Free Press (WINNIPEG, MANITOBA)

ROAD deaths in Manitoba hit a 30-year low in 2014 following a long-term trend of fewer fatal vehicle crashes, statistics from Manitoba Public Insurance show. Seventy people were killed on the province's public roads last year. That's 58 per cent lower than the three-decade high of 168 deaths in 1986.

The vast majority of the deaths happened on rural roads, rather than in Winnipeg, which could be attributed to higher speeds on roads outside the city.

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Families move one step closer to tough drunk driving law

February 12, 2015, Surrey Now (SURREY, B.C.)

A Conservative MP tabled a bill in parliament last week that could radically change the sentencing for drivers who kill other people while drunk behind the wheel.

Langley MP Mark Warawa introduced Bill C-652 - dubbed Cassandra's Law - on Feb. 2 that would change the criminal code from impaired driving causing death to vehicular homicide, making the penalty for conviction life imprisonment.

The driving force behind the bill is a group called Families for Justice, made up of people like former Surrey resident Markita Kaulius, who lost her 22-year-old daughter Cassandra to a drunk driver in 2011.

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Drive safely this Family Day Weekend

February 12, 2015, Government of Ontario (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

As drivers head out to spend time with family and friends this Family Day weekend, Ontario is reminding everyone to stay safe. Here are some safety tips to help....

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B.C. Coroners Service to review how to further reduce driver deaths

February 11, 2015, The Globe and Mail (VANCOUVER, B.C.)

Fewer young drivers are being killed in motor-vehicle crashes in B.C., but the number can still be cut further, the chair of a panel on the issue says.

“Something must be going right, because we have seen, since 2008, a declining rate in young-driver fatalities, but that doesn’t mean there aren’t ongoing opportunities to look at ways we can further reduce those numbers,” Michael Egilson said in an interview on Wednesday...

....Following a recommendation from the panel, the coroner’s service announced it will now conduct a review to determine how to reduce such deaths further.

Key elements of the review will be an assessment of the province’s graduated licensing program, launched in 1998, to see if it can be made more effective, and a renewed effort by the coroner’s service and the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia to collect more data on fatal crashes.

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British Columbia’s 12 deadliest highways

February 10, 2015, Global News (VANCOUVER, B.C.)

...which highways in this province are the most lethal? And is our highway system getting safer as more people use it?

To find out, we asked ICBC for information on every fatal crash on provincial highways from 2004 to 2013.

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Some Saskatchewan drivers still texting behind the wheel

February 9, 2015, CJME.com (REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN)

It's been about five years since using a phone behind the wheel was made illegal in Saskatchewan but people are still doing it.

Texting while driving is the top concern for Canadian drivers, according to CAA, but about 22 per cent of Canadians admit to doing it recently. That number jumps up to 35 per cent in Saskatchewan, compared to 32 per cent in Alberta and 22 per cent in Manitoba.

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Majority of fatal crashes preventable: OPP

February 9, 2015, Toronto Sun (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

OPP collision data from the last 10 years shows that even though the number of fatal crashes are falling, the vast majority are preventable, police say.

OPP Sgt. Kerry Schmidt said if drivers changed their behaviours when it came to the so-called "Big Four" causes of fatalities, there would be fewer deaths on Ontario's roads.

Inattentiveness, speeding, not wearing a seatbelt or helmet and impaired driving remain the four top factors in fatal crashes, he said.

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Traffic-related collisions, fatalities continue to decrease

February 6, 2015, Government of P.E.I. (CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I.)

Traffic-related collisions and injuries continue to decline despite the increasing number of drivers, says Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister Robert Vessey.

"It is encouraging to see that investments in safer roads and increased partnerships with law enforcement and the public are resulting in a positive trend of fewer collisions and injuries," said the minister. "Investments in roads and infrastructure such as roundabouts, highway safety legislation, improved driving habits, and enforcement are all contributing to safer roads."

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Big disconnect between beliefs and actions when it comes to texting while driving

February 6, 2015, The Globe and Mail (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

When it comes to texting while driving in this country, the numbers don't add up.

A poll conducted by the Canadian Automobile Association found that 90 per cent of Canadians believe texting while driving is "socially unacceptable."

However, the same poll found that 22 per cent of Canadians admitted to either reading or sending a text while driving. Note the words, "admitted to." There's no telling how many more did not admit to multi-tasking while behind the wheel.

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Washington mulls abolishing daylight savings, B.C. will not follow

February 5, 2015, The Globe and Mail (VANCOUVER, B.C.)

Washington State lawmakers have proposed a bill that, if passed, could mean a change in time zones driving south to Seattle from Vancouver...spring and fall time changes, and associated sleep disruptions, have been linked to negative health impacts, including work accidents and car crashes.

...The Insurance Corp. of B.C. has tried to compile its own statistics, but there were too many variables - primarily weather - to collect meaningful data, spokesman Adam Grossman said Thursday. However, an ICBC survey of drivers found that about one-third felt less alert immediately after the time change.

"The biggest impacts of the time change can be felt on some of the key skills that affect the quality of our driving: poorer concentration, alertness behind the wheel and reaction time to potential hazards," Mr. Grossman said.

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Ontario looks to put the brakes on vehicle speeds - Consultations to look at reducing default residential speed limit to 40 km/h

February 5, 2015, Ottawa Community News (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

Ottawa drivers could soon find themselves lifting off the gas pedal if the Ontario government has its way.

Queen's Park is looking at ways of reducing de facto speeds on residential streets from 50 km/h to 40 km/h in the interests of pedestrian safety, and will host a series of municipal consultations starting this spring to identify the best options.

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IBC releases new road safety commercial starring CWHL hockey player Kelly Terry

February 5, 2015, Canada Newswire (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

"Drive according to weather conditions." This is the important message Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) is sending with its newest road safety commercial starring Kelly Terry, forward for the Toronto Furries of the Canadian Women's Hockey League (CWHL).

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Alberta considers tougher legislation on distracted driving

February 4, 2015, Global News (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

Changes to Alberta's distracted driving legislation could be on the way.

Since the introduction of the legislation three-and-a-half years ago, there have been calls to make it tougher. A distracted driving ticket in Alberta currently comes with a \$172 fine, however, that may change. Alberta's Transportation Minister hinted Wednesday that demerits could soon be tacked on to distracted driving tickets.

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Young race car driver puts the brakes on distracted driving

February 4, 2015, Alberta Transportation (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

Parker Thompson is on a mission to travel across Alberta to provide his peers with best practices on staying focused when they get behind the wheel.

“In racing, I know that taking my attention off the track for even a second can have serious consequences, and it’s no different when driving on our roads and highways. By educating a new generation of Albertans about the dangers of distracted driving, we can prevent a lot of collisions before they happen” says Parker Thompson.

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Reducing the speed limit in Ontario is not a ‘war on cars’

February 2, 2015, Metro (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

It’s time we stopped treating our neighbourhoods like speed bumps.

We’ve heard a lot of bunk about the “war on cars.” People are frustrated by congestion and long commute times. Motorists recoil at any suggestion that they should slow down, share the road or be impeded in any way.

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Texting and driving fines increase in Nova Scotia

February 1, 2015, CBC News (HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA)

Nova Scotia is increasing the penalty for those who use their cellphones while driving in an effort to crackdown on the dangerous habit.

Starting Sunday, fines for people convicted of using a handheld device while driving have increased to \$233.95 for the first offence (up from \$176.45), \$348.95 for the second offence (up from \$233.95), and \$578.95 for a third offence (up from \$348.95).

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Canadian Events & Conferences in 2015

**Scholarship for Safety Initiative -
The Sarah Beth Therien Memorial
Scholarship, Canada Safety Council**
Open to graduating high school students and
full-time post-secondary students.
Submission Deadline: January 31 - June 15,
2015
[Learn more...](#)

**Transportation Association of Canada
Spring Technical Meeting**
Ottawa Marriott Hotel
Ottawa, Ontario
April 15-21, 2015
[Learn more...](#)

**7th International Conference on Urban
Traffic Safety**
**Theme: Building Safer Communities
Through the Safe System Approach**
Shaw Conference Centre
Edmonton, Alberta.
April 27-30, 2015
[Learn more...](#)

**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
[Learn more...](#)
[Register for the conference...](#)

**Canadian Institute of Transportation
Engineers (CITE) 2015 Conference**
**Theme: Supporting a Healthy Vibrant
Community**
Regina, Saskatchewan
June 7-10, 2015
[Learn more...](#)

CCMTA Annual Meeting
Yukon Convention Centre
Whitehorse, Yukon
June 16-19, 2015
[Learn more...](#)

**Transportation Association of Canada
2015 Conference and Exhibition**
Theme: Getting You There Safely
PEI Convention Centre
Charlottetown, P.E.I.
September 27-30, 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

