



Canadian Road Safety News Digest

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

For the period March 1st to 15th, 2015

Distracted driving demerits applauded by police and accident victim

March 13, 2015, CBC News (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

Renaye Wade spent two years learning to talk again. This week, the right people finally started listening.

Her voice is quiet, her words halting, but her message has been clear and consistent: Alberta needs much tougher distracted driving laws.

A private member's bill introduced by Tory MLA Moe Amery this week proposes a fine increase from \$172 to \$250, and would add three demerit points for drivers caught driving while distracted. The bill is expected to pass during the spring session of the legislature.

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Take your smartphone for a spin: IBC launches new road safety app

March 12, 2015, Canada Newswire (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

At a Fraud Prevention Month event at Danforth Collegiate today, Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) launched the SafetyMobile App, a road safety phone application that educates users about staged collisions. Members of Toronto Police Service, the Financial Services Commission of Ontario and Victims Services Ontario as well as hundreds of students attended the event.

"IBC believes that teaching new drivers about road safety is very important," said Ralph Palumbo, Vice-President, Ontario, IBC. "That's why we launched this new road safety app. It not only encourages drivers to be safe on the road but raises awareness about a serious type of fraud that happens all too often in the Greater Toronto Area - staged collisions."

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MADD Canada, MPI show Manitoba students the 'Aftermath' of impaired driving

March 12, 2015, Market Wired (OAKVILLE, ONTARIO)

An impaired driving crash lasts mere seconds, but the aftermath can last a lifetime, as Manitoba students are learning through MADD Canada's latest School Assembly Program, ('Aftermath').

...MADD Canada and our Provincial Sponsor, Manitoba Public Insurance, are holding a special screening of the program for students and staff at Oak Park High School in Winnipeg today.

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'It's time to look at demerits in distracted driving': Alberta justice minister

March 11, 2015, Global News (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

Alberta's justice minister says it's "simply time" to look at tacking on demerits for distracted drivers in Alberta.

"I'm definitely of the opinion now that it's time to look at demerits in distracted driving," Jonathan Denis said Wednesday. "I've talked to the local police agencies and this is definitely something that they want to pursue."

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Distracted driving deaths likely to surpass impaired driving again: OPP

March 11, 2015, Global News (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

Ontario Provincial Police say distracted driving deaths will likely surpass those of impaired driving for the seventh consecutive year.

OPP statistics indicate that driver inattention has been the reason for 12 of 51 fatal collisions so far in 2015.

The news comes as Ontario police launches their annual distracted driving campaign which runs from March 13 to 20.

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More than 430 auto dealerships across Canada stand up against distracted driving

March 10, 2015, Canada Newswire (VANCOUVER, B.C.)

Canadian auto dealers are banding together this month with a message: they are not okay with distracted driving and want consumers to share their sentiment, inspired by a country-wide campaign to increase attention and education around this dangerous behaviour.

With nearly 80% of collisions caused by some form of distracted driving in Canada - and a leading cause of fatalities every year - more than 430 dealerships have signed up to participate in the Auto Dealers Against Distracted Driving campaign this March, citing the importance of bringing more awareness of the issue to consumers directly through their automotive point-of-sale.

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Ottawa Police want cyclists included in Ontario distracted driving bill

March 9, 2015, CTV News (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

Ottawa Police say cyclists who ride and use smart phones should also be charged under Ontario's proposed distracted driving legislation.

In a written submission to a Queens Park committee on Bill 31, Ottawa Police Sergeant Mark Gatien says cyclists and construction vehicles should be included in the legislation.

"Our hands are presently tied with cell phone infractions being committed on Bicycles and Backhoes etc using our roadways. There have been countless complaints to the Police via social media about the use of phones with these methods of transportation". Gatien wrote.

....Ontario's proposed distracted driving legislation would introduce the highest fines in the country.

Fines would range from \$325 to \$1000 and include demerit points.

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Ottawa Police making distracted driving 'taboo'

March 8, 2015, Ottawa Sun (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

Ottawa police are stepping up the battle against distracted driving, shifting their focus to local schools in a unique approach not seen before in Canada. They want to plant the message early in children's heads that distracted driving kills.

Sgt. Denis Hull says the Ottawa Police Service is collaborating with school boards across the region and is poised to bring educational videos, banners, thumb bands and pledge cards to schools in April as part of the nation-wide Leave the Phone Alone campaign.

While targetting children as young as Grade 1 may seem odd, Sgt. Hull explained the importance of curbing the behaviour from an early age.

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People don't think twice about distracted driving: MADD Canada

March 7, 2015, Toronto Sun (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

Are Ontarians getting the message on distracted driving?

Ontario Provincial Police Sgt. Kerry Schmidt says his officers “continually see people driving while being distracted.

....MADD Canada CEO Andy Murie said the decrease in drunk driving deaths from the 1970s and 1980s until now was no “overnight” feat. “You don’t find anybody going around saying ‘I drove impaired last night,’ thinking it’s funny or acceptable behaviour,” Murie said.

“That’s one of the issues with distracted driving - people don’t think twice about it,’ he said. “Phones have become a piece of everybody’s life. Especially with young people, they’re not willing to lay them aside.” ...“We need some kind of national group to be the voice of distracted driving too,” he added.

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Officials aim for zero traffic deaths in strategy likely to annoy some motorists

March 6, 2015, Edmonton Journal (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

Edmonton's traffic safety officials are pitching a new "Vision Zero" approach to traffic safety that is just as certain to tick off motorists as it is to save lives.

Already, Edmonton traffic gurus are increasing congestion by removing the kind of right turn lanes that allow vehicles to bypass traffic lights, and reducing opportunities for motorists to turn left on a regular green light.

But it's paying off in reduced deaths and hospital admissions.

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IBC reminds Atlantic Canadians of the dangers of impaired driving

March 6, 2015, Canada Newswire (HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA)

Following the Halifax Regional Police's release of impaired driving statistics for the month of February, Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) is reminding Atlantic Canadians of the severe consequences of impaired driving.

"Drinking and driving is a serious act that is not only illegal but can cost people their lives. IBC's message is clear: don't drink and drive," said Amanda Dean, Vice-President, Atlantic, IBC.

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Daylight savings time change has effect on motorists

March 6, 2015, Government of Manitoba (WINNIPEG, MANITOBA)

Collision data collected from 2014 showed there was a 20 per cent increase in collisions on Manitoba roadways following the spring daylight savings time change when compared to all other Mondays in 2014, according to Manitoba Public Insurance.

"The data suggests there can be an affect on drivers when the clocks move forward one hour," said MaryAnn Kempe, vice-president, Business Development & Communications and Chief Product Officer, Manitoba Public Insurance.

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Photo speed enforcement ticketing begins March 8

March 5, 2015, SGI (REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN)

SGI reminds motorists that the three-month warning period for photo speed enforcement is coming to an end, with live ticketing starting March 8, 2015.

“The goal of the photo speed enforcement pilot is zero tickets, zero crashes and zero fatalities,” said Andrew Cartmell, President and CEO of SGI. “More drivers getting in the habit of respecting speed limits will have a positive impact on road safety in the province, which is exactly what this pilot hopes to accomplish.”

The two-year photo speed enforcement pilot was recommended by the all-party Special Committee on Traffic Safety.

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Nearly 5,000 B.C. kids already in child car seats; 1,000 more to receive help as BCAA's investment tops \$500,000

March 5, 2015, BCAA (BURNABY, B.C.)

Through its Community Child Car Seat Program, BCAA, in partnership with United Way of the Lower Mainland, will provide another 1,000 new child car seats throughout the province to be used by kids who may otherwise not have safe transport options. Since launching in 2013, the Community Child Car Seat Program has provided a total of 4,900 car seats to support non-profit agencies, community groups and B.C. families needing a little extra help.

It's estimated that as many as five per cent - roughly 23,000 - British Columbian children don't use a child car seat when travelling by car. BCAA is committed to changing this. Research indicates that a correctly installed child car or booster seat is the most effective tool to help reduce the risk of child-passenger injury or death on the road.

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Alberta watching B.C. crack down on slow left lane drivers

March 4, 2015, Edmonton Sun (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

Alberta will be watching with great interest as the B.C. government prepares to crack down on slow drivers in the left lane.

On Monday, B.C. Transportation Minister Todd Stone said that he hopes to provide local law enforcement officers with more powers to crack down on drivers who move slowly in the left lane as studies show that drivers who don't use the left lane strictly for passing can lead to traffic congestion and an increased chance of accidents.

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Free app for hands-free traffic reports from Alberta Motor Association

March 3, 2015, Edmonton Sun (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

...The AMA Road Reporter app, released on Tuesday free of charge, gives drivers audible road and traffic updates about their route, avoiding making drivers take a risky glance at a map on their screen while behind the wheel...

..."It's with a road safety purpose in mind that we set out to develop much better and safer road condition reporting technology."

The Road Reporter app automatically switches into "drive mode" when it senses the vehicle is moving, hiding the map and delivering traffic updates through the phone's speaker or any Bluetooth connection.

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WATCH: Ontario has no plans to stiffen rules against left-lane hogs

March 3, 2015, News Talk 1010 (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

Transportation minister Steven Del Duca says the province has no plans to change the Highway Traffic Act to stiffen the rules against left-lane hogs.

In British Columbia, the provincial government says it wants to bring in new legislation that would give police more power to fine drivers who are using the left lane improperly

...PC transportation critic Michael Harris says the minister "would be wise" to look at changing the legislation.

"There is the issue that the charges don't always hold up in court because the parameters are very loose, perhaps," Harris says.

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B.C. considers crackdown on 'left-lane hogs'

March 3, 2015, CTV News (VANCOUVER, B.C.)

Drivers who go slowly in the left lanes of highways are such a common nuisance that British Columbia is considering ways to coax them into keeping right.

Todd Stone, B.C.'s Minister of Transportation, told CTV Vancouver that he was reminded of the problem after the province conducted a review of rural road safety.

"One of the key things that we heard from British Columbians all over the province was this frustration related to left-lane hogs," he said.

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B.C. police target distracted driving

March 3, 2015, Vancouver Sun (VANCOUVER, B.C.)

Police departments across B.C. have launched a campaign this month to crack down on distracted driving, and will be handing out hefty fines to those caught texting or talking on a mobile phone.

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PEI Liquor Control Commission supports MADD Canada's School Assembly Program

March 3, 2015, Government of P.E.I. (CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I.)

Representatives from MADD Canada will visit high schools across Prince Edward Island during the week of March 2, 2015 as part of the organization's School Assembly Program. Seven schools will learn about the danger of impaired driving through this year's presentations.

This year's sessions are being made possible through financial sponsorship by the Prince Edward Island Liquor Control Commission...

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Click it or ticket - Saskatchewan police focus on occupant restraints in March

March 3, 2015, SGI (REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN)

CRUNCH! It was a moment - and a sound - Eugene Brown of Arcola, Saskatchewan, will never forget.

..."At the rate we crashed, we would have gone through the windshield if we weren't wearing seatbelts. It was a hard lesson to learn; it rattled me," said Brown.

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Drunk driving law upheld after charter challenge fails

March 2, 2015, CBC News (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

An Alberta judge has rejected a constitutional challenge of the province's Impaired driving law that suspends the licences of people facing charges until they go to trial.

In a lengthy decision, Court of Queen's Bench Justice Thomas Wakeling ruled having an operator's licence is not a right protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

..."Driving a motor vehicle or having an operator's licence is not a constitutional right."

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\$4.9B to be invested in Quebec roads, says Transport Minister Robert Poëti

March 1, 2015, CBC News (MONTREAL, QUEBEC)

Quebec's transport minister, Robert Poëti, announced Sunday that \$4.9 billion will be invested in Quebec road projects between 2015 and 2017.

..."It's a matter of safety, but at the same time it's a matter to rebuilt together through collective transport through other ways so we enhance the quality of life for our population and focus on economic development," said Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre.

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Hitting hard on distracted driving

March 1, 2015, Ottawa Sun (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

...The simulator seeks to show people who think they can text and drive -- or have done so without incident so far -- that there are immediate and obvious dangerous flaws in their ability to control a car from the moment they pick up their hand-held device.

In 2013, 40% of all collisions in Ottawa involved distracted driving.

The presentation was part of an education, enforcement and awareness campaign by Ottawa police, the Canadian Automobile Association and Safer Roads Ottawa called Leave the Phone Alone.

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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...](#)

Parachute's Safe Kids Week
**Theme: promotion and awareness of
cycling and road safety in communities
across the country**

Across Canada
May 4-10, 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

