



Canadian Road Safety News Digest

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

For the Period December 1-31, 2017

Drunk driving to be largely decriminalized in Alberta in 2018

December 29, 2017, CBC News (EDMONTON, ALBERTA)

Changes are coming to the way drunk drivers are policed and prosecuted in Alberta with the provincial government set to issue a directive to police that will largely decriminalize impaired driving, CBC News has learned.

Officers will be given wide discretion whether to criminally charge those who blow over the legal limit. But, for the most part, first time offenders will see roadside administrative sanctions rather than face criminal charges according to CBC sources.

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Texting and driving awareness is up, but Canadians believe the problem is getting worse

December 29, 2017, The Star (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

A survey suggests most Canadians believe texting and driving is getting worse despite police crackdowns and extensive public education efforts.

In the November survey conducted by the Canadian Automobile Association, 83 per cent of respondents said they believe texting while driving is a bigger problem now than it was three years ago.

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Which new vehicle-safety technologies are worth the upgrade?

December 27, 2017, CTV News (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

We are in a new era of car safety: The focus has shifted from reducing death and injury in a vehicle collision to preventing a crash from happening in the first place. Safety features designed to avoid accidents are becoming increasingly common in new cars.

Here is an overview of the advanced safety features you're likely to encounter when shopping for a new car, along with examples of what carmakers call their versions of the features.

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Transport Canada makes two electronic devices mandatory for trucks and buses

December 20, 2017, Insurance Business Magazine (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

Transport Canada has passed new regulations that require commercial trucks and buses to have two electronic safety devices installed.

The new regulations require electronic stability control technology on new truck tractors and heavy buses sold in Canada. Separate proposed regulations will implement mandatory electronic logging devices for federally regulated motor carriers, a release said.

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Many cannabis users aren't convinced that marijuana causes impaired driving: survey

December 19, 2017, National Post (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

A new Health Canada survey shows that Canadians are hazy on the risks of driving high.

Only half of respondents who had consumed cannabis in the last year felt that marijuana use affects driving, according to the Canadian Cannabis Survey, released Tuesday, compared to 75 per cent of all respondents. Another 24 per cent said it depends, while 19 per cent said cannabis doesn't affect driving.

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Impaired driving trend climbing high in Manitoba

December 15, 2017, Global News (WINNIPEG, MANITOBA)

Winnipeg Police and Manitoba RCMP are echoing the same message to drivers this holiday season, to make the right choice and stop driving impaired.

In week two of the Festive Season Checkstop Program, Winnipeg Police said there were 14 impaired driving-related arrests. One of which was a drug impaired driver for someone under the influence of marijuana.

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Full moon linked to increased risk of fatal motorcycle crashes: research

December 11, 2017, CTV News (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

A distracting full moon may increase the risk of fatal motorcycle crashes, according to new research published in the British Medical Journal.

And Canadians could be more susceptible to the distraction of a large moon, say researchers Dr. Donald Redelmeier at the University of Toronto and Eldar Shafir at Princeton University.

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Advocates disappointed as Queen's Park votes down vulnerable road users act

December 11, 2017, Metro News (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

A private member's bill that would have made Ontario the first province in Canada with a vulnerable road users law has been quashed.

The legislature's Justice Policy Committee voted last week against adding proposals from the NDP's Cheri DiNovo to Bill 174 seeking to toughen penalties for distracted and dangerous drivers.

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Progress in curbing drinking and driving but continued vigilance needed: poll

December 10, 2017, TIRF (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

The Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) is pleased to announce a new fact sheet that summarizes findings on self-reported drinking and driving in Canada. This fact sheet is based on the Road Safety Monitor (RSM) 2017 poll conducted by TIRF, in partnership with Beer Canada and State Farm®. The results indicate that while progress has been made to curb drinking and driving, continued attention and monitoring is needed to avoid losing ground.

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New road-safety bill aims to crack down on distracted drivers in Quebec

December 8, 2017, Montreal Gazette (MONTREAL, QUEBEC)

Quebec's transport minister tabled a strict new road safety bill Friday that would significantly increase fines for anyone caught using a cellphone behind the wheel and also tightens rules for new drivers. Bill 165 is the first major overhaul of Quebec's Highway Safety Code since 1986.

Since then, an estimated one million cars have been added to Quebec roadways. New technologies are also a concern – around 60,000 tickets are issued every year for using a cellphone while driving and distracted driving is now the cause of a third of fatal vehicle accidents.

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Most drivers worried about impact of legalized marijuana on road safety: survey

December 7, 2017, CTV News (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

Nearly half of drivers who are also marijuana users told a survey they drive better, drive about the same or don't know if cannabis impacts their ability behind the wheel.

The survey -- a poll of 1,000 drivers commissioned by the Canadian Automobile Association South Central Ontario and conducted by Ipsos -- found that 16 per cent of respondents had used marijuana within the last three months.

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Province way behind in dealing with marijuana-impaired driving, says lawyer

December 6, 2017, CBC News (VANCOUVER, BC)

This week, the provincial government announced plans for the sale of recreational marijuana in British Columbia, but Vancouver defence lawyer Kyla Lee says roadside testing is lacking and there's no provincial plan for dealing with drug-impaired driving.

"Right now, we have a structure in place under the Criminal Code for dealing with marijuana-impaired driving, but it's a terrible system," Lee told Rick Cluff on The Early Edition.

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Ottawa launches campaign against youth drug-impaired driving

December 5, 2017, CBC News (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

As the July deadline for legalizing marijuana in Canada looms, the Liberals are launching the first in a series of ads to dissuade young people from driving while high. The first video ad will launch Dec. 18 and run on television and social media, and in movie theatres the country, says Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale's office.

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Fatally Injured Drivers Testing Positive for Marijuana on the Rise

December 4, 2017, TIRF (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

The Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) is pleased to announce the release of a new fact sheet that summarizes trends in marijuana use among fatally injured drivers in Canada between 2000 and 2014. Results show that, since 2000, the percentage of fatally injured drivers testing positive for marijuana increased, while during this same time period, the percentage of fatally injured drivers testing positive for alcohol decreased. Results are based on data from TIRF's National Fatality Database, which is maintained with financial support from State Farm® and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

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Vision Zero Network slams Toronto's proposed donations program for road safety

December 4, 2017, The Star (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

Organizers with the international campaign that inspired Toronto's Vision Zero plan are questioning the city's commitment to road safety after staff outlined a donations program to help pay for traffic calming measures.

"If a city commits to Vision Zero, they need to invest the resources necessary to prioritize safety," said Vision Zero Network spokesperson Kathleen Ferrier. "Treating safety as a nice-to-have amenity rather than a need-to-have priority is just not acceptable.

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Major New Investment to Make Cycling Safer and More Convenient

December 4, 2017, Government of Ontario (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

Ontario is making it safer and more convenient for people to get around by bike, by more than doubling its investment in local cycling to build bike lanes and other cycling infrastructure in towns and cities across the province. This investment is part of Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan and is funded by proceeds from the province's cap on pollution and carbon market.

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City of Kamloops pilots new weather station technology to improve road safety

December 1, 2017, CBC News (KAMLOOPS, BC)

The City of Kamloops is the first community in Western Canada to pilot new technology aimed at helping improve road safety.

The city is working with WeatherBrain, an Edmonton-based company to try out four weather stations.

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Canada Safety Council warns against driving while high on marijuana

December 1, 2017, Gulf News (OTTAWA, ONTARIO)

It's National Safe Driving Week (Dec. 1-7) and the Canada Safety Council (CSC) and Public Safety Canada (PSC) are reminding motorists of the dangers of getting behind the wheel of a vehicle while under the influence of marijuana.

"It's a very dangerous idea to drive after consuming marijuana," CSC president Jack Smith said in a news release.

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Canadian Events & Conferences in 2018

Vision Zero Advocate Conference

Toronto, Ontario
Feb 28-Mar 2, 2018

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CCMTA 2018 Annual Meeting

Quebec City, QC
June 3-6, 2018

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Ontario Road Safety Forum - Third Meeting

Toronto, Ontario
March 6, 2018

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CARSP Conference 2018

Victoria, BC
June 10-13, 2018

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Highway Safety Research Centre – Free Course on Road Safety Fundamentals

Online
March 8 - April 26, 2018

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The 10th International ACM Conference on Automotive User Interfaces and Interactive Vehicular Applications

Toronto, Ontario
September 23-25, 2018

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