



Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Supporting police professionals through innovative and inclusive police leadership to advance the safety and security of all Canadians.

When it comes to road safety:
BE A HERO.
AIM FOR ZERO.

Zero problematic driving behaviours at the wheel means:

- Zero collisions
- Zero injuries
- Zero deaths

#OperationImpact2021 October 8 - 11, 2021

NATIONAL FACTS AND STATS

Road Safety in Canada

According to the [International Transport Forum Road Safety Data](#):

1. Canada reported 1,922 road fatalities in 2018, a 3.6% increase from 2017.
2. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Canada introduced lockdown measures that led to:
 - a. A reduction of 30% to 50% in traffic volume
 - b. A reduction of 46% in the number of road deaths in April 2020, compared with the average for 2017-2019, based on estimated data.
3. Between 2000 and 2018:
 - a. the number of annual road fatalities fell by 34%.
 - b. the number of traffic deaths per 100 000 inhabitants in Canada fell by 45%. In 2018, the number was 5.2.
 - c. the number of traffic deaths per billion vehicle-kilometres driven fell by 50%. In 2018, the number was 4.9.
 - d. the number of road fatalities per 10 000 registered vehicles fell by 50%. In 2018, the number was 0.8.
4. In 2018, passenger cars (62%), pedestrians (17%), motorcyclists (9%) and cyclists (2%) accounted for the road fatalities.
5. In 2018, the age group at the highest risk was that of over 75 years-old, with a rate of 8.7 fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants.
6. In 2018, 32% of deaths occurred on rural roads, 31% on urban roads and 16% on motorways.
7. In 2018, traffic crashes represented a very significant cost for society at CAD 40.7 billion or 2.1% of GDP. (Costs include fatalities, hospitalizations, slight injuries, property damage costs, and other.)

According to the [Canadian Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision Statistics, 2018](#):

8. In 2018, the number of motor vehicle fatalities in Canada was 1,922, up 3.6% from 2017 (1,856).
9. In 2018, there were 9,494 serious injuries due to motor vehicle collisions in Canada, down 6.1% from 2017 (10,107).
10. In 2018, the number of fatalities per 100,000 population increased slightly to 5.2 (from 5.0 in 2017), yet it is still the second lowest on record.
11. In 2018, the number of fatalities per billion vehicle kilometers travelled increased slightly to 4.9 (from 4.8 in 2017), also the second lowest recorded.

According to the Traffic Injury Research Foundation's [Road Safety Monitor 2017 – Drugs & Driving in Canada](#) published in October 2018:

12. Drinking and driving ranked first (71.3%) and road safety in general ranked third (64.5%) among societal issues that also included the price of gas at the pumps (68.5%), global warming (61.6%), the economy (57.4%) and pollution (54.6%).
13. Canadians ranked road safety issues in the following order:
 - a. Drivers texting while driving (89%)
 - b. Distracted drivers (80.9%)
 - c. Drivers using cell phones (either hand-held or hands free) (76.9%)
 - d. Drinking drivers (76.6%)
 - e. Drugged drivers (70.4%)
 - f. Older drivers using prescription drugs (51.9%)

According to the [Canada's Road Safety Strategy 2025 – Towards Zero: The Safest Roads in the World](#) published in January 2016:

14. Canada is one of the first countries in the world to adopt a national road safety strategy.
15. Each year in Canada, about 2,000 people are killed and 165,000 are injured, (10,000 seriously) while using our road transportation system and costs society \$37 billion (2.2% of Canadian GDP) annually. (*Transport Canada, 2015, Draft Report on the Social Costs of Collisions in Canada, 1996-2012*)
16. This is Canada's fourth (4th) national road safety strategy
 - a. **1996: Road Safety Vision 2001** – The progress made during RSV 2001 can be measured by the 10% decrease in fatalities and 16% decline in serious injuries despite steady increases in the road user population.
 - b. **2001: Road Safety Vision 2010** – The national target called for a 30% decrease in the average number of road users killed and seriously injured during the 2008-2010 period compared to 1996-2001 baseline figures. Although the 30% reduction in fatalities and serious injuries was not achieved by 2010, it was achieved soon after in 2011.

- c. **2011: Road Safety Strategy 2015** – Road safety was approached in a different way introducing the Safe System Approach as a holistic way to tackle road user, vehicle and road infrastructure issues and moved away from having established numerical targets. Having said that, in 2013, the number of fatalities and serious injuries on Canada’s roads both decreased by 21% when compared to the 2006-2010 baseline period.
- d. **2016: Road Safety Strategy 2025** – This strategy is similar to its predecessors. It retains a number of principles key to the strategy’s success that are aligned with international best practices in road safety. These principles include adopting the Safe System Approach, having a 10-year strategy and providing an inventory of proven and promising best practices to address key risk groups and contributing factors.

According to the 2011 Transport Canada [Road Safety in Canada Report](#):

- 17. From 2004 to 2008, the annual social costs of the motor vehicles collisions in terms of loss of life, medical treatment, rehabilitation, lost productivity, and property damage are measured in tens of billions of dollars.

According to the [Canadian Automobile Association](#) (CAA):

- 18. Economic losses caused by traffic collision-related health care costs and lost productivity are at least \$10 billion annually. That’s about 1% of Canada’s GDP! (Government of Canada)
- 19. The economic and social consequence of road crashes in Canada is estimated to be \$25 billion per year, including direct and indirect costs, as well as pain and suffering. (Traffic Injury Research Foundation)

According to the [Traffic Injury Research Foundation](#):

- 20. More than 90% of road crashes are a result of human error or condition. This means that road crashes are entirely preventable.

According to the MADD [Alcohol and/or Drugs Among Crash Victims Dying Within 12 Months, by Jurisdiction Canada, 2014](#) (April 2018):

- 21. In 2014, road crashes claimed an estimated 2,297 lives.

According to the [Alcohol Crash Problem in Canada 2015 Report](#) published by the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA) in October 2019:

- 22. In Canada (excluding British Columbia) during 2015, 1,631 persons died within 30 days of a motor vehicle crash. (page 16)

Alcohol-Impaired Driving

According to the [International Transport Forum Road Safety Data](#):

1. In 2018, approximately one-in-five fatal collisions were reported to have alcohol involvement as a contributing factor. (*National Collision Database*)

According to the [Alcohol Crash Problem in Canada 2015 Report](#) published by the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA) in October 2019:

2. In Canada (excluding British Columbia) during 2015, 464 persons (30%) died in alcohol-related crashes within 30 days of the collision. (page 16)
3. During 2015, there were 231 pedestrians fatally injured. (page 26)
4. 15% of serious injury collisions were alcohol-related crashes. (page 31)
5. Less than half of all drivers killed (41%) were involved in single-vehicle collisions but these crashes accounted for approximately two-thirds of the drivers who had been drinking or were legally impaired (67% and 70% respectively). (page 25)

According to the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrator's [A Compilation of Jurisdictional Roadside Surveys Conducted Prior to Cannabis Legalization](#) published in September 2019:

6. 4% of drivers tested positive for alcohol
7. Drivers age 25-34 were most likely to have been drinking (5%)

According to the 2011 Transport Canada [Road Safety in Canada Report](#):

8. In 2008, coroners' testing showed that almost 40% of fatally injured drivers had been drinking some amount of alcohol (HBD) prior to the collision.
9. About 60% of collisions involving a drinking driver were single vehicle collisions, while almost 90% of those collisions involving drivers over .08 involved only one vehicle.

According to the Traffic Injury Research Foundation's [Road Safety Monitor 2017 – Drugs & Driving in Canada](#) published in October 2018:

10. In 2014, 28.5% of fatally injured drivers tested positive for alcohol.

According to the MADD [Alcohol and/or Drugs Among Crash Victims Dying Within 12 Months, by Jurisdiction Canada, 2014](#) (April 2018):

11. In 2014, road crashes claimed an estimated 2,297 lives. Based on testing of fatally-injured drivers, it may be estimated that 1,273(55.4%) of these deaths resulted from crashes in which an individual was positive for alcohol and/or drugs:
 - 299 deaths, or 13%, occurred in crashes involving individuals who were positive for alcohol alone
 - 356 deaths, or 15.5%, occurred in crashes involving individuals who were positive for both alcohol and drugs.

According to the Traffic Injury Research Foundation's [Road Safety Monitor 2019: Drinking and Driving in Canada](#) (December 2019):

12. In 2016, 480 Canadians were killed in a road crash involving a drinking driver.
13. The percentage of persons killed in a crash on a public roadway in Canada involving a drinking driver was 29%.
14. The number of persons who died in crashes involving a drinking driver between 1995 and 2016 generally decreased (480 compared to 1,067). While this 55% decrease is indicative of progress achieved, two consecutive increases in 2015 and 2016 is a concern.
15. In 2019, 15% of drivers admitted to driving after consuming any amount of alcohol, down from 20% in 2018.
16. In 2019, 69% of respondents agreed drivers should be required to submit to test of physical coordination if suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
17. In 2019, 56% of respondents agreed the police should be allowed to do random breath tests to detect drinking drivers.

Drug-Impaired Driving

According to the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrator's [A Compilation of Jurisdictional Roadside Surveys Conducted Prior to Cannabis Legalization](#) published in September 2019:

1. 10% of drivers tested positive for drugs and 8 % tested positive for cannabis.
2. Drug use was most prevalent among drivers aged 20 to 24 (14%) and decreased with increasing age.

According to the Traffic Injury Research Foundation's [Road Safety Monitor 2017 – Drugs & Driving in Canada](#) published in October 2018:

3. In 2014, 42.4% of fatally injured drivers tested positive for drugs:
 - a. 44.7% tested positive for cannabis
 - b. 41.2% tested positive for CNS depressants
 - c. 24.9% tested positive for CNS stimulants
 - d. 24% tested positive for narcotic analgesics
4. In 2017, the percentage of drivers who drove within two hours of taking drugs in the past 12 months was:
 - a. Over-the-counter drugs for allergies, hay fever, colds, flu, cough or insomnia (15.4%)
 - b. Prescription drugs that may affect driving (3.1%)
 - c. Marijuana or hashish (2.9%)
 - d. Illegal drugs (1.3%)
 - e. Marijuana/hashish and alcohol (1.2%)

According to the [Baseline Survey on Awareness, Knowledge and Behaviour Associated with Recreational Use of Marijuana: Final Report 2016](#):

5. Over 1 in 4 cannabis users in Canada reported having operated a vehicle while under the influence of the drug.
6. 33% of parents of youth aged 13-24 don't know if their child has accepted a ride with a driver who was under the influence of cannabis.
7. Canadian men are 2.5 times more likely than women to have driven a vehicle while under the influence of cannabis.

According to the Statistics Canada [Impaired Driving in Canada, 2015 report](#):

8. A drug-impaired driving offence occurs every 3 hours in Canada each day.
9. 2,786 drug-impaired driving incidents were reported in Canada in 2015.
10. Among the police-reported impaired driving incidents in 2015, nearly 3,000 involved drug-impaired driving, including 7 incidents causing death and 19 causing bodily harm.
11. Drug-impaired driving rose from 2% of all impaired driving incidents in 2009 to 4% in 2015.

According to the [2014 Alcohol and Drug Crash Problem Report](#) produced by the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators:

12. Drugs other than alcohol (e.g. prescription such as valium, over-the counter such as cold medicines, or illegal such as marijuana) are found in 42.4% of tested fatally injured drivers.
13. Fatally injured drivers aged 26-35 were the most likely to have been positive for drugs – 47.7% of drivers in this age group tested positive for drugs. By contrast, 36.2% of drivers aged 16-19 tested positive for drugs.

According to the MADD [Alcohol and/or Drugs Among Crash Victims Dying Within 12 Months, by Jurisdiction Canada, 2014](#) (April 2018):

14. In 2014, road crashes claimed an estimated 2,297 lives. Based on testing of fatally-injured drivers, it may be estimated that 1,273(55.4%) of these deaths resulted from crashes in which an individual was positive for alcohol and/or drugs:
 - a. 618 deaths, or 26.9%, occurred in crashes involving individuals who were positive for drugs alone.
 - b. 356 deaths, or 15.5%, occurred in crashes involving individuals who were positive for both alcohol and drugs.
15. 19% of all fatally-injured drivers tested positive for cannabis in 2014.

According to the [Traffic Injury Research Foundation](#):

16. Since 2015, there has been an increasing trend in drivers admitting that they have driven when they thought they were over the legal limit. (Road Safety Monitor 2018)

According to the 2012 [Acute cannabis consumption and motor vehicle collision risk: systematic review of observational studies and meta-analysis](#):

17. Cannabis doubles your chances for an accident.

Other interesting facts:

18. Currently, \$1,000 plus a 1-year license suspension is the minimum it will cost you if you get caught driving impaired.

Available education resources

- Public Safety Canada infographic: [The facts about drug-impaired driving in Canada](#) (2018)
- Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction: [Talking Pot with Youth: A Cannabis Communication Guide for Youth Allies](#)
- Drug Free Kids Canada: [The Cannabis Talk Kit](#)

Fatigue-impaired Driving

According to the [International Transport Forum Road Safety Data](#):

1. In 2018, it is estimated that about 20% of fatal collisions involve driver fatigue. (CCMTA, 2010)

According to the 2011 Transport Canada [Road Safety in Canada Report](#):

2. 20% of fatal collisions involve driver fatigue.¹
3. 60% of Canadian drivers admitted that they occasionally drove while fatigued and 15% admitted that they had fallen asleep while driving during the past year.²

According to the [Traffic Injury Research Foundation](#) (October 2016):

4. 18.5% of respondents admitted that they had fallen asleep or nodded off while driving in the past year (Marcoux et al. 2012)
5. In 2000, 4.6% of fatalities were fatigue-related compared to 6.4% in 2013.
6. Generally, fatigue-related fatal crashes more commonly occur in the middle of the night (3 a.m. to 5:59 a.m.) and afternoon (3 p.m. and 5:59 p.m.)

¹ CCMTA, 2010

² Vanlaar et al., 2008

Aggressive Driving

According to the [International Transport Forum Road Safety Data](#):

1. In 2018, approximately 23% of fatal crashes involved speeding.

According to the 2011 Transport Canada [Road Safety in Canada Report](#):

2. 27% of fatalities and 19% of serious injuries involve speeding.
3. 40% of speeding drivers involved in fatal crashes were 16 to 24 years of age.
4. Most drivers killed in speed-related crashes were the ones speeding.
5. 80% of young adult passengers who were killed in a speeding crash were in the vehicle with a speeding driver of similar age.
6. Single-vehicle crashes accounted for more than 50% of speeding deaths and serious injuries.
7. 1 in 3 speeding drivers involved in a fatal crash had been drinking.
8. Research indicates that a 1% reduction in speed results in reducing the likelihood of a fatal collision by 5%. (OECD, 2008)
9. 47% of Canadians agree that speeding is a main cause of traffic collisions and 70% admit to exceeding the speed limit at least sometimes, particularly on highways (81%)³
10. 30% of fatalities and 40% of serious injuries occur at intersections.
11. Older drivers (65+) are much more likely to commit an infraction leading to an intersection crash than most other drivers.
12. Younger drivers (16 to 24) are at higher risk of being killed in motor vehicle collisions per distance traveled than all other age groups.

Distracted Driving

According to the [International Transport Forum Road Safety Data](#):

1. In 2018, distracted driving contributed to an estimated 20% of fatal collisions and 21% of serious injury collisions.

According to the 2011 Transport Canada [Road Safety in Canada Report](#):

2. Cell phone use while driving in the previous seven days was reported by 37%, but this was even higher for those aged 16-34 (55%). (Vanlaar et al. 2006)
3. About 3% of Canadian drivers were observed to be using cell phones. (Rural and Urban Surveys of Seat Belt use in Canada 2009-2010)

³ National study conducted by Ekos Research (2007) for Transport Canada
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According to the [Canadian Automobile Association](#) (CAA):

4. 47% of Canadians admit that they have typed out or used the voice-memo feature to send a message while driving. (CAA polling, 2020)
5. Almost half of Canadians (47%) have programmed a destination on their GPS or mobile device while driving (CAA polling, 2020)
6. Mobile phone use while driving leads to 1.6 million crashes annually (National Safety Council, 2019)
7. Distracted driving fatalities have surpassed those caused by impaired driving in some parts of Canada (Traffic Injury Research Foundation, 2019)
8. The likelihood of a collision is increased 3.6 times when using an electronic device. (Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, 2019)
9. 94% of teen drivers acknowledge the dangers of texting and driving, but 35% of those admitted to still doing it. (Think Insure, 2019)
10. Canadians say that texting while driving is one of the biggest threats to their personal safety on the road. (CAA, 2018)
11. Drivers who check their phones while driving are up to eight times more likely to be in a crash. (AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 2017)
12. Drivers conversing on mobile devices, either hands-free or hand-held are up to four times as likely to be involved in a crash. (AAA, 2017)
13. Police across Canada say that distracted driving has caused more collisions than impaired drivers (ICBC, 2016)
14. 33% of Canadians admit they have texted while stopped at a red light, despite believing it is unacceptable. (CAA, 2016)
15. 10% of fatal crashes, 18% of injury crashes, and 16% of all police-reported motor vehicle traffic crashes were distraction-affected crashes. (National Highway Safety Administration, 2015)
16. Distraction was a factor in nearly 6 out of 10 moderate-to-severe teen crashes. (AAA, 2015)
17. Driver distraction is a factor in about 4 million motor vehicle crashes in North America each year. (RCMP, 2014)
18. Estimates indicate drivers using phones look at, but fail to see, up to 50% of the information in their driving environment (National Safety Council, 2012)
19. 80% of collisions and 65% of near crashes have some form of driver inattention as contributing factors. (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2010)
20. The most distracting task while driving is programming navigation or GPS systems.
21. About 26% of all car crashes involve phone use, including hands-free phone use (National Safety Council)
22. Checking a text for 5 seconds means that at 90 km/h, you've travelled the length of a football field blindfolded.

According to the [TELUS Wise against distracted driving infographic](#):

23. When you drive distracted, you slow your reaction time by 35%.⁴
24. When you drive distracted, you increase your crash risk by 500%.⁵
25. When you drive distracted, you fail to 'see' 50% of what's in your environment.⁶

According to the [TELUS WISE Smartphone safety – distracted driving guide](#):

26. The likelihood to be in a crash or near crash event increases this much with the following distractions:
 - a. Texting on a smartphone: 23 times more likely
 - b. Talking on a cellphone or smartphone: 4-5 times more likely
 - c. Reading: 3 times for likely
 - d. Applying makeup: 3 times for likely
 - e. Reaching for a moving object: 9 times more likely
 - f. Dialing on a hand-held device: 3 times more likely
 - g. Talking or listening on a hand-held device: 1.3 times more likely

According to the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators [Use of Electronic Communication Devices by Canadian Drivers: Combined Urban/Rural Sites \(2016-2017\)](#):

27. Nationally, the use of electronic communication devices (ECD) by drivers was estimated to be 7.2%.
 - 62% of drivers were males and 38% were females.
 - 11% of drivers were under 25 years of age, 62% were between 25 and 49 years old and 27% were 50 years and older
28. Talking on an ECD was more frequent by drivers (2.9%) than was typing/texting (2.2%), talking and typing/texting at the same time (0.4%) or holding the ECD (0.9%).

Other interesting statistics:

29. 36% of Canadians reported having used their cell phone while driving in the previous seven days⁷
30. About 7% of Canadian drivers were observed to be using cell phones.⁸
31. Taking your eyes off the road for two seconds doubles the risk of an accident.
32. 22.5% of serious injuries (i.e. individual hospitalized at least overnight) in Canada involved some type of distracted driving. (CCMTA, National Collision Database, 2015)

⁴ Transport Research Laboratory, 2014

⁵ Kidd & McCartt, 2015

⁶ National Safety Council, 2012

⁷ [2011 Road Safety Monitor by TIRF](#)

⁸ CCMTA ECD Use by Driver survey 2016/17

Seatbelts and Child Restraints

According to the [International Transport Forum Road Safety Data](#):

1. Seat belt use in Canada over the last few years was approximately 95%. However, more than 30% of occupants killed in 2018 were unbelted at the time of the crash.

According to the 2011 Transport Canada [Road Safety in Canada Report](#):

2. Seat belts worn correctly can reduce the chances of death in a collision by 47% and the chances of serious injury by 52%.⁹
3. Proper use of child restraints can reduce the likelihood of death by 71% and injury by 67%.¹⁰
4. 30% of fatally injured drivers and 26% of fatally injured passengers were not wearing their belts at the time of the collision.¹¹

According to the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators [Use of Electronic Communication Devices by Canadian Drivers: Combined Urban/Rural Sites \(2016-2017\)](#):

5. Belt use nationally has increased from 92.7% to 97.2 % since 2006. Most jurisdictions have seen significant increases in belt use over the years.

⁹ Stewart et al., 1997

¹⁰ Isaksson-Hellman et al., 1997

¹¹ [Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision statistics, 2016](#), Transport Canada