

# Impact of Cannabis Legalization on Impaired Driving Crashes in Vermont

---

MANDY WHITE

OPERATIONS & SAFETY BUREAU – DATA UNIT



# Crash Data Collection & Querying

---



Crash data is collected by law enforcement using Web Crash – a web-based data collection system.



Collected data is then queried using the integrated Ad-Hoc reporting tool.

# Recent Trends

---

## Annual Vehicle Miles Travelled (AVMT)

- 2019 – 7,345,600,000
- 2020 – 5,990,600,000
- 18% decrease in VMT from 2019 to 2020.
- Up to 40-50% below 2019 levels during 2020 “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order.
- Most recent week volume is 14% below 2019 levels. <sup>1</sup>

## 2020

- Fatal Crashes – 58
- Fatalities – 61

## 2021 <sup>2</sup>

- Fatal Crashes – 31
- Fatalities – 34

As of <b>July 26</b> in each calendar year shown:		
Year	Fatalities (People)	Fatal Crashes
2021	34	31
2020	32	30
2019	14	13
2018	36	29
2017	29	27

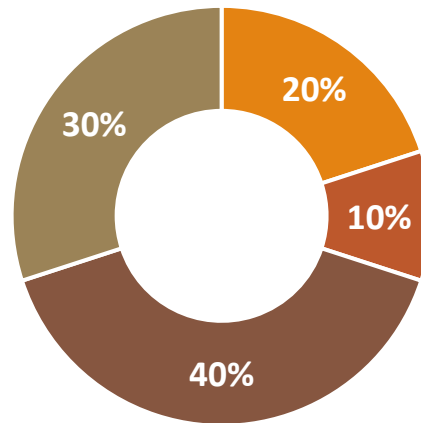
Fatal Crash Data	2021*	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Total Fatal Crashes	31	57	44	61	64	59	50
Total Fatalities (People)	34	61	47	69	70	64	57
Double Fatality Crashes	3	4	3	8	3	2	5
Triple Fatality Crashes	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Quadruple Fatality Crashes	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Operators Suspected as Driving under the Influence of Alcohol Only	4	11	5	5	6	14	4
Operators Suspected as Driving under the Influence of Drugs Only	2	14	15	13	18	10	11
Operators Suspected as Driving under the Influence of both Alcohol & Drugs	4	6	2	10	11	10	9
Active Cannabis - Delta 9 THC Confirmed**	4	12	13	14	16	19	11
Operators Suspected of Speeding	9	15	14	22	27	29	16
Operators with Suspended License/ No License	4	13	5	7	11	10	5
Junior License Operators involved in fatal crashes	2	2	1	4	2	0	1
"Older Drivers" involved in fatal Crashes (Older Driver is defined as any person age 65 or older. & "involved" does not imply "fault")	6	15	16	14	15	14	11
Crashes involving a Large Truck/Bus ("involving" does not imply "fault")	2	4	10	6	3	5	4
Motorcyclist Fatalities	7	10	8	7	13	11	11

\* DATA IS COMPLETE THROUGH 07/26/21 \*\* ACTIVE CANNABIS – DELTA-9 THC CONFIRMED IS COUNTED IN THE NUMBER OF OPERATORS THAT HAD DRUGS ONLY OR ALCOHOL & DRUGS

## Fatal Crashes with Impairment 2012-2020

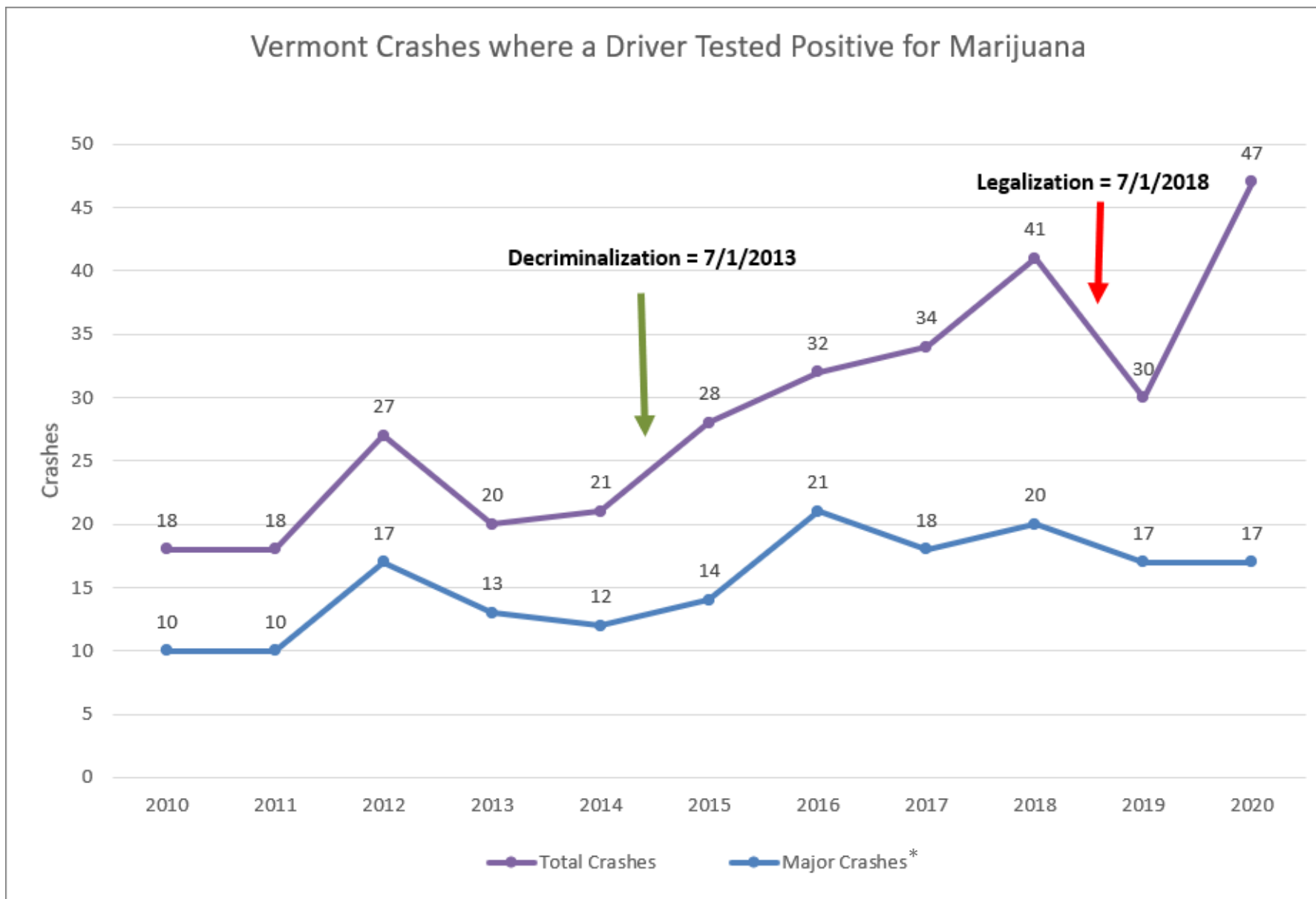
Categories	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alcohol Only (0.08+)	13	9	3	4	14	7	4	5	11
Alcohol (0.08+) & Delta-9 THC	4	5	0	5	7	3	6	1	2
Alcohol & Other Drugs (inc. Delta-9 THC)	6	5	3	4	3	6	2	1	6
Drug: Delta-9 THC Only	5	3	5	3	5	8	7	6	4
Drug: Other* (includes Delta-9 THC)	11	6	5	8	4	10	10	9	8
<b>Total Impaired Fatal Crashes</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Total Fatal Crashes</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>59</b>	62	61	44	57
<b>Impaired Percentage of Fatal Crashes</b>	<b>55.7%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>38.1%</b>	<b>48.0%</b>	<b>55.9%</b>	<b>54.8%</b>	<b>47.5%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	<b>54.4%</b>

### Drug Combinations for Operators Testing Positive for Cannabis in Fatal Crashes - 2020



- Cannabis Only
- Cannabis & Alcohol (0.08+)
- Cannabis & Other Drugs (No Alcohol)
- Cannabis, Other Drugs & Alcohol (0.08%)

## Vermont Crashes where a Driver Tested Positive for Marijuana



\* MAJOR CRASHES ARE DEFINED BY THE VERMONT AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION (VTRANS) AS FATAL OR INCAPACITATING INJURY CRASHES

# Countermeasures & Strategies

---

- Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP): 5-year plan that states goals and outlines tactics for minimizing the occurrence and severity of highway crashes and related injuries and fatalities. Key impaired driving countermeasures include:
  - Improving public awareness of what impaired driving is and its associated dangers.
  - Increasing training for law enforcement officers to assist them in detecting incidents of Driving While Impaired by Drugs.
  - Supporting a more efficient means of collecting evidentiary samples in Driving While Impaired by Drugs cases.
- Highway Safety Plan (HSP) : VTrans produces an annual Highway Safety Plan that documents the State's highway safety program that is data-driven in establishing performance targets and selecting the countermeasure strategies, planned activities and projects to meet performance targets.