MORE ACCIDENTS WITH DRUGGED DRIVERS AS MEDICAL MARIJUANA GROWS

Posted on July 3, 2011 at 8:29pm by Christopher Santarelli

Deadly repercussions have continued to accompany growing medical marijuana use in California. The Los Angeles Times reports on statistics showing the surging number of car accidents involving high drivers over the last decade, which local law enforcement attribute to the growing number of medical marijuana users:

"The most recent assessment by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, based on random roadside checks, found that 16.3% of all drivers nationwide at night were on various legal and illegal impairing drugs, half of them high on marijuana.

In California alone, nearly 1,000 deaths and injuries each year are blamed directly on drugged drivers, according to CHP data, and law enforcement puts much of the blame on the rapid growth of medical marijuana use in the last decade. Fatalities in crashes where drugs were the primary cause and alcohol was not involved jumped 55% over the 10 years ending in 2009."

While President Obama has gone from a hands-off approach to now pushing federal prosecution of anyone in the business of growing or supplying marijuana for medical patients, the medical marijuana movement continues to pick speed as now one third of all states allow such sales. The growing legality of medical marijuana seems mind-boggling considering most states don’t even have a formal standard on the amount of the drug drivers should, if at all, be allowed to have in their blood.

"While 13 states have adopted zero-tolerance laws, 35 states including California have no formal standard, and instead rely on the judgment of police to determine impairment."
Even the most cautious approach of zero tolerance is fraught with complex medical issues about whether residual low levels of marijuana can impair a driver days after the drug is smoked. Marijuana advocates say some state and federal officials are trying to make it impossible for individuals to use marijuana and drive legally for days or weeks afterward.

The call for a standardized system to judge impairment is debated by national leaders in law enforcement, as some feel the current system works well to identify impaired drivers, and any future legal limit or medical test would not bring about major change. However federal officials and local prosecutors argue that the lack of a standard makes convictions harder to obtain.

“In October, a San Diego jury acquitted Terry Barraclough, a 60-year-old technical writer and medical marijuana user, on manslaughter charges in a fatal crash that occurred shortly after he had smoked marijuana.

A blood test showed he had high levels of active marijuana ingredients in his blood, but the jury heard conflicting expert testimony from toxicologists about the possible effects.

Martin Doyle, the deputy district attorney who prosecuted Barraclough, said the acquittal showed that the lack of a formal legal limit on marijuana intoxication makes such prosecutions tough.”

Over 500,000 Americans currently use legal medical marijuana. Do you want to share the road with any of them?
WOULD YOU SMOKE OR INGEST THESE POISONS ALONE? LET ALONE A PLANT THAT CONTAINS 430 KNOWN CARCINOGENS.

As a recreational drug, marijuana is really bad for your health.

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VENOCE

Posted on July 3, 2011 at 8:39pm
Well Duh!! Who would have thought!! Fence off California!

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CANTENBOY

Posted on July 3, 2011 at 8:40pm
How many in cigarettes, the Government’s preferred form of legal addiction?

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LADBACKTAPS

Posted on July 3, 2011 at 8:40pm
Hey! Like BOOZE… Regulate! It should be the Right to CHOOSE what you do.
Consequences will follow though if your outta line. I got no problem with smoking a joint when your home, out back after work and you aint goin to hurt anyone.

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CANTENBOY

Posted on July 3, 2011 at 8:42pm
I know there are very detailed statistics about how many traffic-related deaths alcohol causes but I have never seen any relating to marijuana… why?

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AARONDM

Posted on July 3, 2011 at 8:43pm
This is because they law is not clear in California. Make it legal, as it has been shown to be much safer than alcohol... then make driving while impaired illegal... Oh I forgot.. driving while impaired is already illegal, in every state including California.

Or we could use the logic: "If we pass more laws against it, people already breaking laws will not break the new ones." Driving while under the influence of anything including sleep deprivation is already against the law in California. Regardless several international studies have shown marijuana consumption and driving is not nearly as dangerous as alcohol... but anyone with common sense should know its both illegal and stupid.

The CHP would happily arrest people for having bad breath if given ample opportunity. Why anyone even considers their opinion is beyond me. Perhaps they have never lived in California or dealt with the A$$&@*(#) they call the CHP.

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CANTENBOY

Posted on July 3, 2011 at 8:44pm
Carcinogens, that is.

I guess I could ask my neighbor, he speaks through a hole in his throat.
WHAT? You mean people high on pot get in auto accidents? What a surprise!!

Freedom isn’t free. It comes with sacrifices. We could end all highway deaths by banning all cars, but the regulatory and personal freedom toll that would take on our society would far outweigh the benefit from mass mobility.

Likewise, the war on drugs has taken a huge regulatory and personal freedom toll on our society, one that far outweighs the loss of life of victims of a few irresponsible individuals.

tl;dr: Don’t blame the drugs (inanimate objects). Blame the drug abusers (sovereign individuals with wills of their own).

I learned it from watching you dad!...I learned it from watching you...

I would think people that smoke medical marajuana would not want to drive due to their medical problems, and also putting other peoples lives at risk that are on the road. Take a cab or let someone else do the driving. Kick back and enjoy the ride.

Marijuana is not bad for you! It is all just a lie put out by the Hearst Empire to save their timber mills! The real enemy is tobacco. Cigarettes kill! But MaryJane gives life (its a medecine you know!) Cigarettes are smoked by soldiers. Weed makes love, not war. Second hand smoke from cigarettes makes babies and puppies explode. But smoke from a joint makes smurfs pop up out of the ground...

In CA , cigarette smoke is dangerous and pot smoke is therapeutic.
I looked up the states after California went dumb and have a policy that I do not go across their borders. If everyone hits these states in the pocketbooks they will see the light.

I keep hearing the argument that weed doesn’t hurt anyone, well gang, if you were around in the 60’s and 70’s like I was, you know how many got left behind with brains that were damaged, that never lived up to the potential they had. Granted they were hard core-and some went on to worse stuff, but I saw enough then to know it was very dangerous and it still is. Why on earth anyone would want more impaired drivers by legalizing it is beyond me. The ones using it for medical reasons have to be just as careful as anyone using medications-but weed kind of takes inhibitions away and they seem to think they are perfectly okey dokey! They really were right about the egg and your brains on drugs.

If they set up DUI check points on Nov 7th, BO will lose a lot of votes.

Many people get in accidents after eating Hamburgers. Ban them.

Well DUH. Why have you allowed your azzes to go faster than your brains?

It might have been the stronger drugs like LSD that damaged them.

Enforce each individual’s right to life and property, and people will do what it takes to pay attention while driving so they don’t hurt anyone. But infringing on their right to drug their own bodies is unConstitutional.
GYPSY123
Posted on July 3, 2011 at 9:14pm
Time for 3 strikes and you are out to hit again this is how the country collects money. But are we surprised. They won't let you smoke a cigarette but you can smoke marijuana. They want you brain dead so they can control you surprised?

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CHIPS1
Posted on July 3, 2011 at 9:16pm
Hooka Tooka My Soda Cracker. (Chubby Checker)

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