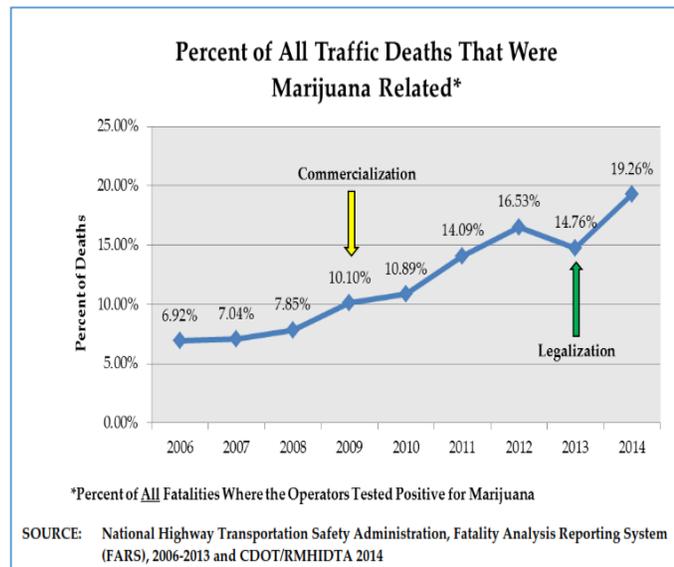


**The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado: [The Impact Vol. 3/September 2015](#)**  
(Summary of Report)

**Section 1 – Impaired Driving:**

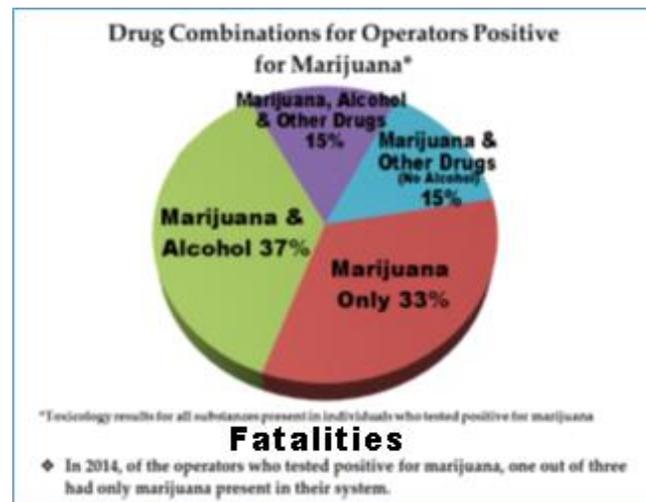
In 2014, when retail marijuana businesses began operating, there was a **32%** increase in marijuana-related traffic deaths in just one year from 2013.

- Colorado marijuana-related traffic deaths increased **92%** from 2010 – 2014. During the same time period all traffic deaths only increased **8%**.
- Marijuana-related traffic deaths were approximately **20%** of all traffic deaths in 2014 compared to half that (**10%**) just five years ago.
- In 2014, when retail marijuana businesses began operating, toxicology reports with positive marijuana results of active THC results for primarily driving under the influence have increased **45%** in just one year.
- The Colorado State Patrol DUID Program, started in 2014, indicated: **77%** (674) of the 874 DUIDs involved marijuana **41%** (354) of the 874 DUIDs involved marijuana only



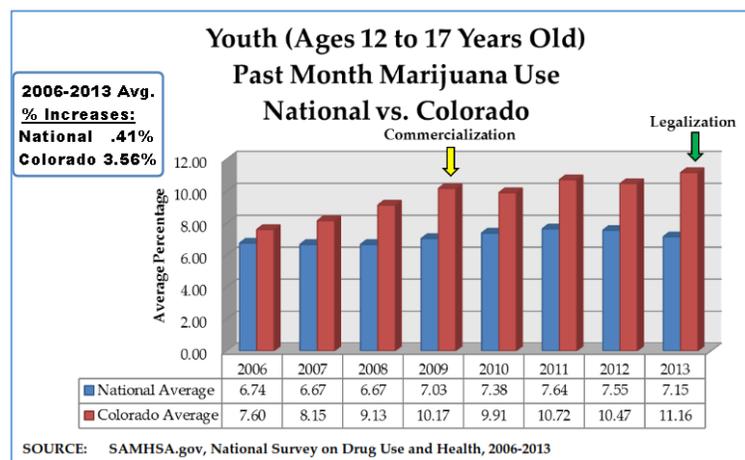
**Economic Cost of Vehicle Accidents Resulting in Fatalities:** According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration report, *The Economic and Societal Impact Of Motor Vehicles Crashes, 2010*, the total economic costs for a vehicle fatality is \$1,398,916. That includes property damage, medical, insurance, productivity, among other considerations.

**Cost of Driving Under the Influence:** The cost associated with the first driving- under-the-influence offense (DUI) is estimated at \$10,270. Costs associated with a DUID (driving-under-the-influence-of-drugs) are very similar to those of a DUI/alcohol.



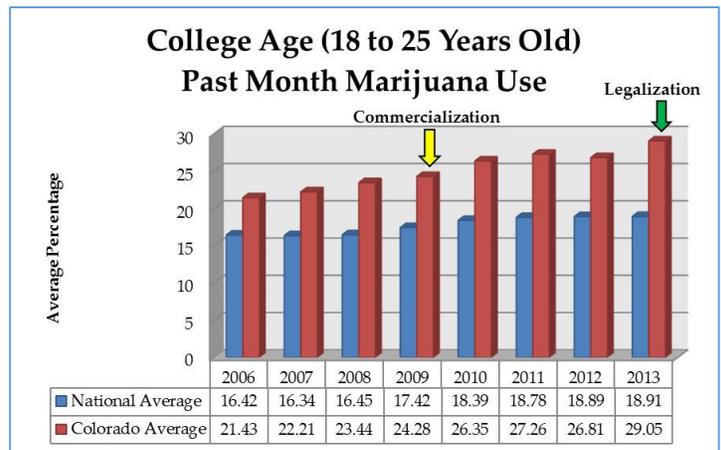
**Section 2 – Youth Marijuana Use:**

- In 2013, **11.16%** of Colorado youth ages 12 to 17 years old were considered current marijuana users compared to **7.15%** nationally. Colorado ranked **3** in the nation and was **56%** higher than the national average. (2006-Colorado was ranked 14<sup>th</sup> nationally.)
- Drug-related suspensions/expulsions increased **40%** from school years 2008/2009 to 2013/2014. The vast majority were for marijuana violations.
- There was a **20%** increase in the% of 12 to 17 year old probationers testing positive for marijuana since marijuana was legalized for recreational purposes.
- A 2015 survey of school resource officers and school counselors revealed similar results about increased school marijuana issues since the legalization of recreational marijuana.
- There was an **8 %** increase in just one year after legalization of recreational marijuana in 2013.



**Section 3 – Adult Marijuana Use:** 2006-2013 Avg. % Increase National: 1.49% CO: 7.62%

- In 2013, **29%** of college age students (ages 18 to 25 years old) were considered current marijuana users compared to **18.91%** nationally. Colorado, ranked **2<sup>nd</sup>** in the nation, was **54%** higher than the national average.
- In 2013, **10.13%** of adults ages 26 years old and over were considered current marijuana users compared to **5.45%** nationally. Colorado, ranked **5<sup>th</sup>** in the nation, was **86%** higher than the national average.
- Probationers age 18 to 25 and 26+ years old testing positive for marijuana increased **49 and 87%** respectively since marijuana was legalized in 2013.
- The top ten states for the highest rate of current marijuana use were all medical-marijuana states.
- College age rate (18 to 25 years old): Top ten states average of **26.31%** compared to national average of **18.91%**.



**Section 4 – Emergency Room Marijuana and Hospital Marijuana-Related Admissions:**

- In 2014, when retail marijuana businesses began operating, there was a **29 %** increase in the number of marijuana-related emergency room visits in only one year.
- In 2014, when retail marijuana businesses began operating, there was a **38 %** increase in the number of marijuana-related hospitalizations in only one year.
- In the three years after medical marijuana was commercialized, compared to the three years prior, there was a **46%** increase in hospitalizations related to marijuana.
- Children’s Hospital Colorado reported **2** marijuana ingestions among children under 12 in 2009 compared to **16** in 2014.

**Section 5 – Marijuana-Related Exposure:**

- In 2014, when retail marijuana businesses began operating, marijuana-only related exposures increased **72%** in only one year.
- In the years medical marijuana was commercialized (2009 – 2012), marijuana-related exposures averaged a **42%** increase from pre-commercialization years (2006 – 2008) average.
- During the years 2013 – 2014, the average number of all age exposures was 175 per year. Exposures have doubled since marijuana was legalized in Colorado.
- Young children (ages 0 to 5) marijuana-related exposures in Colorado:
  - During the years 2013 – 2014, the average number of children exposed was **31** per year.
  - This is a **138%** increase from the medical marijuana commercialization years (2009 – 2012) average which was a **225 %** increase from pre-commercialization years (2006 – 2008).

**Section 6 – Treatment:**

- Over the last ten years, the top three drugs involved in treatment admissions, in descending order, were alcohol (average **12,943**), marijuana (average **6,491**) and methamphetamine (average **5,044**).
- Marijuana treatment data from Colorado in years 2005 – 2014 does not appear to demonstrate a definite trend. Colorado averages approximately **6,500** treatment admissions annual for marijuana abuse.

### **Section 7 – Diversion of Colorado Marijuana:**

- During 2009 – 2012, when medical marijuana was commercialized, the yearly average number interdiction seizures of Colorado marijuana increased **365 %** from **52** to **242** per year.
- During 2013 – 2014, when recreational marijuana was legalized, the yearly average interdiction seizures of Colorado marijuana increased another **34%** from **242** to **324**.
- The average pounds of Colorado marijuana seized, destined for 36 other states, increased **33%** from 2005 – 2008 compared to 2009 – 2014.

### **Section 8 – Diversion by Parcel:**

- U.S. mail parcel interceptions of Colorado marijuana, destined for 38 other states, increased **2,033%** from 2010 – 2014.
- Pounds of Colorado marijuana seized in the U.S. mail, destined for 38 other states, increased **722%** from 2010 – 2014.
- From 2006 – 2008, compared to 2013 – 2014, the average number of seized parcels containing Colorado marijuana, that were destined outside the United States, increased over **7,750%** and pounds of marijuana seized in those parcels increased over **1,079%**.

### **Section 9 – THC Extraction Labs:**

- In 2013, there were **12** THC extraction lab explosions compared to **32** in 2014.
- In 2013, there were **18** injuries from THC extraction lab explosions compared to **30** in 2014.
- It should be noted that based on the first seven months of reported THC extraction lab explosions in 2015, there appears to be a significant decline from the previous two years. This is largely due to the publicity generated by the police, fire, healthcare and media in 2014 regarding the dangers of THC extraction labs. As of September 9, 2015, only seven lab explosions have been reported to Rocky Mountain HIDTA and only four lab-related injuries reported to the Burn Center.

### **Section 10 – Related Data:**

1. **TAX REVENUE:** Overall, crime in Denver increased 12.3% from 2012 to 2014. Colorado annual **tax revenue** from the sale of recreational marijuana was **52.5** million (CY2014) or about **0.7%** of total general fund revenue (FY2015). In Colorado, sales of retail marijuana have reaped about \$18.9 million in state taxes (with a percentage to go to local governments) from January through June 30, according to the state Department of Revenue. That's about **46 percent of what the Colorado Legislative Council**, the nonpartisan research staff to the state's General Assembly, predicted before legalization.
2. **COSTS: Estimated cost related** to marijuana revenues total approximately **21.9 million** \*\*\*  
\*\*\***DOES NOT INCLUDE COSTS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT NOR ANY COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH SOCIETAL IMPACTS SUCH AS TRAFFIC DEATHS AND EMERGENCY ROOM ADMISSIONS**, increased absenteeism from school and work, increased homelessness, increased unemployable, increased dropout rate, increased treatment costs. Nor any environmental costs
3. **BANNED:** The majority of cities & counties in Co have banned recreational marijuana businesses.
4. **THC potency** has risen from a national average of **3.96%** in 1995 to an average of **12.55%** in 2013. The average potency in Colorado was **17.1 %**.
5. **HOMELESS RATES** have increased with the appeal of legal marijuana being a factor.
  - 2013-2014 285% 2014-June 2015 59% increases in overnight beds provided.
  - 30% relocate for pot.
  - Of the homeless, transient, and sheltered population 25% are in jail and not for petty crimes.
6. **MMC:** Denver has more licensed medical marijuana centers (198) than **pharmacies (117)**.
7. **DISPENSARIES:** CO has more marijuana dispensaries than McDonalds & Starbucks combined.
8. **INSURANCE COMPANIES** will not cover damages from a grow establishment because it is still federally illegal.
9. **ELECTRICITY:** Colorado's marijuana industry uses **large amounts of energy** for lighting and air conditioning. The owner of one of Colorado's largest cannabis companies said that her utility bill is approximately **\$40,000 a month**.
10. **POLLING:** 2014/15 polling reflect a decrease in "favor" legalization.
11. **DRUG TESTING:** **Marijuana showed** up in **20% more employee drug** the first year marijuana was legalized/ Quest Diagnosis
12. **LABELING:** 80% of **edible labels** for marijuana products were inaccurate per researchers

**Some of the proposed & propogandized benefits legalization advocates cite include:**

1. **Eliminate arrests for possession and sale, resulting in fewer people with criminal records and a reduction in the prison population and Free up law enforcement resources to target more serious and violent criminals. **HOWEVER:****

- Crimes against persons increased **15.1 percent**
- Crimes against property decreased **3 percent**
- Crimes against society increased **23 percent**
- All other offenses increased **41 percent**
- **The majority of marijuana-related crime was the burglary of licensed marijuana businesses.**

2. **Reduce traffic fatalities since users will switch from alcohol to marijuana, which does not impair driving to the same degree. **HOWEVER:****

- THC results for primarily driving under the influence have increased **45%** in just one year
- Since 2012 **alcohol consumption** has increased 4% (CO Department of Revenue, CO Liquor Excise Tax)

3. **No increase in use, even among youth, because of tight regulations. **HOWEVER:****

4. **Added revenue generated through taxation. **HOWEVER:****

- Total marijuana tax revenue (medical and recreational) for FY2015 comprises 7/10 of 1 percent (0.7%) of Colorado's total general fund revenue.
- This is 46% less than projected.

5. **Eliminate the black market. **HOWEVER:****

- "The criminals are still selling on the black market. ...We have plenty of cartel activity in Colorado (and) plenty of illegal activity that has not decreased at all."
- Denver police records showing a nearly 1,000% spike in the amount of marijuana officers have seized — 937 pounds in 2011 compared to a little more than 4 tons last year.

## **Florida Seizures**

**Colorado Marijuana to Broward County, Florida:** In 2014, there were nine separate parcels received in **Broward County, Florida** that were marijuana originating from Colorado. The total weight was 30.17 pounds with one package as small as 4 grams and another as large as 17 pounds. There was hash oil and marijuana candy seized in two of the packages. Four of the packages were sent from Denver, two from Aurora, one from Lakewood, one from Colorado Springs and one from Golden.

**Brownies to Florida:** In March 2015, the West Metro Task Force responded to a parcel company that opened a suspicious package and found two baggies with marijuana brownies, along with a business card. The card read "Sweet Mary Jane – Merciful Chocolate." The package was destined for Sulphur Springs, Florida.

**Colorado Marijuana to Northern Florida:** In Northern Florida, 15 marijuana and/or hashish parcels from Colorado had been sent to Florida weighing a total of 40.5 pounds. All the marijuana was hydroponic and destined for **Florida** with the exception of one 5.7 pound package that was destined for **Georgia**.

## **Hillsborough County:** 2015 Drug Indicator Report- Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance

- Students reported marijuana (25.0% lifetime and 12.8% past-30-day use) as the second most commonly used drug.
- Although marijuana is just slightly higher than the Florida statewide average, recent movement toward legalization is changing perceptions as youth report less risk of harm.
- In 2014, Hillsborough County experienced a decrease in reported lifetime use of alcohol, cigarettes, inhalants, and illicit drugs but increased in reported marijuana use.
- For middle and high school students, marijuana was the second most commonly used drug, followed by cigarettes.
- Hillsborough County rates for alcohol binge drinking and cigarettes decreased in 2014, whereas marijuana increased.
- Marijuana use was above the Florida Statewide rate in 2014.