

Will Legalization of Marijuana Result in an Increase in the Number of DWIs and Car Accidents? - *NJ Cannabis Blog*

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At the forefront of any argument against legalization of marijuana are concerns that legalization will lead to an increase in DWI's and traffic accidents. New Jersey's recent push to legalize recreational use of Marijuana has recently garnered similar arguments from New Jersey State Senator Joe Pennacio. Several studies set out to determine whether these concerns were warranted. One such study was conducted by the American Journal of Public Health ("AJPH").

The AJPH researchers analyzed federal data on fatal car crashes from 2009 to 2015. The AJPH, "found no significant association between recreational marijuana legalization in Washington and Colorado and subsequent changes in motor vehicle crash fatality rates in the first 3 years after recreational marijuana legalization."

Although it may be too early to fully realize the effects of legalization, what we can gather is that legalization will not open the floodgates for DWI's and Traffic accidents. Researcher will continue to monitor the issue as more data becomes available. Some researchers hypothesize that the legalization of marijuana will result in a decrease of alcohol consumption thereby decreasing the incidents of DWI's and traffic accidents. In fact, in late 2017, Larry Wold, Chief Medical Officer of the Colorado Department of Public Health stated, "We (the state of Colorado) have not experienced any significant issue as a result of legalization. . . . We have actually seen an overall decrease in DUI's since legalization. So, the short answer is: There has been no increase since the legalization of marijuana here."

Pashman Stein Walder Hayden is carefully monitoring developments in New Jersey and federally with respect to marijuana legislation and will be available to help its clients navigate the sure-to-be complex

regulatory framework of this potential business frontier.

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