



# Canadian Road Safety News Digest

A monthly compilation of national, provincial and local news stories on road safety

For the Period February 1-29, 2024

## Winnipeg police launch cannabis education program to reduce drug-impaired driving

February 1 2024, CityNews Winnipeg

Everyone is very used to hearing ‘don’t drink and drive’. We have to have that same effect when we talk about, don’t drive while high,” said Patrol Sergeant Stephane Fontaine with the Winnipeg Police Service.

Since cannabis was legalized in 2018, Winnipeg Police say more people have been found driving under the influence. Officers are hoping to reduce those numbers through its new education program, #DontDriveHigh.

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## When you’re behind the wheel, every text can wait

February 1 2024, City of Ottawa

Ottawa winters give you plenty of distractions, with icy or snowy roads, snowplows, reduced visibility due to blowing snow and worrying about being late because of the poor conditions. Not to mention that not everyone is confident driving in winter conditions. These are even more reasons why you should never text while driving or let your cell phone or smartwatch distract you, even in the handsfree mode.

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## Montreal public health calls for fewer cars in school zones

February 1 2024, CBC News

Reducing the number of cars on the road is more necessary than ever to ensure safety, according to a new Montreal Public Health report.

More than 430 minors were injured on Montreal roads in 2022 – an increase from 388 in 2021 and 250 in 2020.

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## SGL: distracted driving not just about phones, not just a caution for drivers

February 2 2024, Discover Weyburn

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## Investigation of commercial Vehicle collision with George Massey Tunnel - Update

February 2 2024, Royal Canadian Mounted Police

On January 10, 2024, frontline Richmond RCMP responded to a report of a combination commercial vehicle and trailer collision with the roof area of the George Massey Tunnel midspan. Evidence was discovered suggesting that the tunnel had sustained damage and needed to be immediately closed until a thorough structural assessment could be completed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI). Neither the commercial vehicle, nor its driver, were present upon police arrival. This incident caused considerable traffic related issues over a wide area.

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## US investigation of Tesla steering problems is upgraded and now one step closer to a recall

February 2 2024, CityNews Toronto

A U.S. government investigation into steering problems with more than 334,000 Tesla electric vehicles is a step closer to a recall.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says in documents posted Friday that it upgraded a 2023 investigation to an engineering analysis.

The probe was opened in July of last year after the agency received a dozen complaints about loss of steering control in 2023 Model Y and 3 vehicles. Now the agency says it has 115 complaints, and it received another 2,176 after requesting information from the company.

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## Toronto passes new framework to deal with ticket disputes for red light and speed cameras

February 7 2024, CP24

Toronto City Council has passed a new framework to streamline the complaints process around red light and speed camera tickets as it ramps up the use of the technology.

Under the plan, ticket disputes will be moved from the provincial courts to a city-administered penalty system, similar to parking ticket disputes.

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## Can you navigate a roundabout? ICBC says 30% of us don't feel comfortable

February 7 2024, CityNews Vancouver

The roundabout – a traffic calmer that exists in cities across the world, especially Europe – is giving drivers in B.C. a bit of a headache, ICBC says.

Single or multi-lane roundabouts can reduce injury crashes by up to 75 per cent, the province's insurer explains, but drivers in B.C. seem to be uncomfortable when they approach them.

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## Traffic flowing 3 times faster on King Street transit corridor since city agents deployed: mayor

February 9 2024, CBC News

Traffic flow along the King Street transit priority corridor is now three times faster following the deployment of traffic agents in December, Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow announced Friday.

At a news conference at the intersection of King Street and University Avenue, Chow said thousands of people spend hours every day on King Street going to work or school.

She said a lot of that time is spent "sitting in traffic, staring out the window, being stuck in traffic, and that is not a good experience."

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## Impassable winter roads create 'dire' situation for Ontario First Nations

February 10 2024, CityNews Toronto

Impassable winter roads are delaying vital shipments and threatening the safety of First Nations across northern Ontario, leaders warned as they pressed the provincial and federal government for support.

An unseasonably warm winter, intensified by human-caused climate change, has left many remote First Nations cut off from an essential road network built over frozen land, lakes and rivers. The situation has prompted recent state of emergency declarations by First Nations in Manitoba and Ontario, as well as repeated requests for support.

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## Mobileye CEO Shashua expects more autonomous vehicles on the road in 2 years as tech moves ahead

February 12 2024, CityNews Toronto

DETROIT (AP) — Six years ago, automakers and tech companies thought they were on the cusp of putting thousands of self-driving robotaxis on the street to carry passengers without a human driver.

Then an Uber autonomous test vehicle hit and killed a pedestrian in Arizona, multiple problems arose with Tesla's partially automated systems, and General Motors' Cruise robotaxis ran into trouble in San Francisco.

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## GM is expanding its hands-free driving system to rural highways

February 15 2024, Yahoo Movies Canada

GM is expanding access to Super Cruise with plans to let drivers use the hands-free advanced driver-assistance system (ADAS) on about 750,000 miles of roads in the United States and Canada. The expansion, which will nearly double the automaker's Super Cruise network by 2025, will include rural and minor highways that often connect smaller cities and townships.

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## Ottawa police urge Quebec to align drunk driving rules with Ontario's

February 16 2024, CBC News

The Ottawa Police Service says it would prefer if Ontario and Quebec were in the same lane when it comes to the amount of alcohol drivers can have in their system before taking the wheel.

In an interview with Radio-Canada on Wednesday, Sgt. Amy Gagnon said the different provincial laws may cause confusion for drivers.

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## Automated speed enforcement continues to improve road safety

February 16 2024, Region of Durham

Speed is a contributing factor in approximately one-third of fatal collisions. Reducing speed is the best way to reduce both the frequency and severity of collisions in our community.

To help reduce speeds, Durham Region has Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) cameras in some school zones and designated Community Safety Zones on Regional Roads.

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## Common car safety feature fails to prevent collision most of the time, study shows

February 16 2024, The Globe and Mail

A common safety feature designed to stop drivers from backing into an approaching vehicle or a pedestrian doesn't work as intended much of the time, new research shows.

In tests by the American Automobile Association (AAA), rear automatic emergency braking (AEB) with cross-traffic detection failed to prevent a crash between a reversing SUV and an approaching vehicle more than 97 per cent of the time.

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## The 10 states with the most drug-related fatal car accidents

February 17 2024, Yahoo News Canada

A new study has concluded that Vermont tops the list of states with the highest percentage of fatal car crashes in which someone tested positive for drug use. The study by the Jackman Law Firm of Tacoma analyzed data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System within the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

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## The slower I go the more time I have

February 19 2024, Cochrane Times-Post

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), traffic collisions are the leading cause of death for youth aged 5 to 29 years<sup>1</sup>. Canadian statistics back this up. Traffic collisions in Canada are the leading cause of injury related deaths for youth<sup>2</sup>.

One of the most effective strategies to reduce the number and severity of collisions is to reduce speed limits to 30 kph or lower. The observed benefits are even more pronounced in areas, such as urban settings, where vulnerable road users, including pedestrians and cyclists, are present.

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## Windsor Police and UWindsor Researcher Team Up in Distracted Driving Study

February 21 2024, windsoriteDOTca News

Windsor Police are teaming up with a researcher at the University of Windsor to study distracted driving in school zones and other elevated-risk areas of the city.

Francesco Biondi, a renowned expert in how drivers behave behind the wheel, will be leading the study together with Barry Horrobin, director of planning and physical resources at Windsor Police.

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## Mixed reaction to county response to traffic issues

February 21 2024, The Hamilton Spectator

Renfrew County's Operations Committee has reviewed Whitewater Region's recommendations for dealing with pedestrian safety on County Road 61 (Godfrey Road/Haley Road) in Haley Station and has determined traffic numbers do not warrant an all-way stop at the intersection of the county road and the municipality's Firehall Lane.

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## Saanich releases its proposed road safety plan

February 22 2024, Capital Daily

Every 10 hours someone in Saanich gets hurt in a motor vehicle crash. Nearly half the time, it's a pedestrian or cyclist, according to Saanich, which wants to run its proposed new road safety plan by the people who use its roadways.

"We have heard your concerns about road safety and addressing them is a top priority for council," Mayor Dean Murdock said in a release.

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## City of Guelph is revolutionizing road safety with new Vision Zero tools

February 22 2024, City of Guelph

The City of Guelph is taking a leap forward in road safety with the launch of the Vision Zero Collision Dashboard, Key Actions, and Storymap. These comprehensive, interactive and data-driven platforms are designed to enhance transparency, and engagement, and inform on the City's initiatives to improve road safety across Guelph.

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## OSLTG aims to boost Ontario road safety

February 22 2024, Truck News

The Ontario Safety League (OSL) has launched the Ontario Safety League Transportation Group (OSLTG) to lobby for and promote safety on the province's roads.

"My belief is that the Ministry [of Transportation] would be better served if a more focused organization will be able to provide them with advice," said Brian Patterson, OSL's president and CEO. "We'll provide information backed by proper research. Our approach is focused on tangible transformations that address the pressing needs of Ontario's safety plans."

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## **New road safety tool shows collisions fell to 1,589 last year**

February 22 2024, Guelph-Today

The number of reported vehicle collisions in Guelph dropped by nearly 25 per cent last year, shows a new road safety information dashboard from city officials.

Announced Thursday, the dashboard is one of three new online tools available for residents to keep abreast of collision data and city-led road safety initiatives. The others are a website dedicated to providing information about various initiatives, and a story map.

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## **Ontario drivers may need to incur costlier damages before collision reporting becomes mandatory**

February 23 2024, CP24

The Ontario government is considering changing the threshold for Property Damage Only (PBO) collision reporting—more than doubling the damage value required before a crash must be reported to police.

Minister of Transportation Prabmeet Sarkaria told CTV News Toronto the dollar threshold has remained stagnant at \$2,000 since 2015.

“We’ve heard some challenges that people have with respect to getting to reporting centres,” he said.

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## Road-safety plan needs more focus on walkable neighborhoods, says pedestrian advocate

February 24 2024, Times Colonist

Saanich unveiled the first draft this week of a 10-year road safety plan that would include installing safer infrastructure at high-risk intersections

While Saanich's draft road-safety plan hits the right notes, it lacks detail and doesn't include specific information on funding, says a member of the Capital Regional District's Traffic Safety Commission.

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## Electric school buses finally make headway, but hurdles still stand

February 25 2024, CityNews Toronto

The first electric school buses in the United States began running a decade ago in three school districts in California, providing a ride that was much less noisy, smelly and dirty than the diesel buses kids and parents were used to.

Yet despite the availability of the technology all these years, fewer than one percent of the 489,000 school buses in the U.S. were electric at the end of 2023.

That means nearly all the buses that take many of the nation's children to school still run on a fuel that sends contaminants into the air and is carcinogenic.

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## Highway Hotline adds Track My Plow feature

February 25 2024, 620 CKRM

Saskatchewan drivers now have access to a new feature on the Highway Hotline aimed at enhancing winter travel safety.

The Track My Plow feature enables drivers to monitor the movements of snowplows as they work on clearing snow and ice from Saskatchewan highways.

The Track My Plow feature is in its pilot phase on the Highway Hotline website and smartphone app. Users can track the path of snowplows and view their recent activities in winter road maintenance for up to two hours.

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## Does automatic emergency braking prevent crashes and make roads safer?

February 25 2024, The Globe and Mail

I saw that rear automatic emergency braking systems failed much of the time in recent tests, but how does front emergency braking fare? Does any of this safety tech reduce crashes in the real world? - Chris

Systems designed to hit the brakes if something - or someone - is in your car's path can prevent some serious crashes - but they don't always work like they're supposed to.

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## The Ottawa Police announces new cruiser design

February 26 2024, Ottawa Police Service

The cruiser consists of an all-blue vehicle with white vinyl panels installed on the front and rear doors. The Heraldic crest and “police” logo appear across the front and rear doors on both sides, with the “Ottawa” logo on both sides near the back of the vehicle. There are reflective decals on all sides to ensure public and officer safety. The new cruiser decals cost the same as the vehicles we currently have in circulation.

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## Saskatchewan street laws updated to crack down on stunting and street racing

February 27 2024, Global News

Tougher penalties are coming for Saskatchewan drivers who stunt, street race or commit high-speed offences.

SGI announced that as of May 1, drivers caught exceeding the speed limit by more than 50 km/h or double the posted speed limit, stunting or street racing will receive a 30-day vehicle impoundment and seven-day license suspension.

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## Measures to improve road safety to be introduced

February 28 2024, Yahoo News Canada

Safety measures are being considered for a road where four people died in four years.

Improving safety at Puddock Road in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire is part of a scheme by Cambridgeshire County Council to make travel across the county safer.

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## ALPR technology is enhancing road safety

February 28 2024, Royal Canadian Mounted Police

There is nothing like a second set of eyes to spot problems. In our goal to enhance road safety and reduce crime, a specially equipped police vehicle is currently assisting our Road Safety Unit and frontline officers. This vehicle is equipped with ALPR or Automated License Plate Recognition technology and acts as the second set of eyes.

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## Traffic agents cost Toronto thousands every week. Why does the city need them?

February 29 2024, Global News

Toronto is spending thousands of dollars every week to place men and women with whistles on street corners as gridlock in the city reaches breaking point.

A long-running municipal program puts city-trained staff and Toronto police officers at intersections to keep wayward drivers in line, in an attempt to quell congestion.

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## Safety improvements coming for deadly intersection

February 29 2024, Winnipeg Free Press

The grieving mother of a young woman killed by a drunk driver is relieved city officials have finally approved the construction of a four-way stop at the intersection where her daughter's vehicle was struck – but remains uneasy over how long it may take to build.

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# Canadian Events & Conferences in 2024

## **CARSP Winter webinar series**

January - April, 2024

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## **CARSP Conference 2024**

June 16-19, 2024

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September 22-25, 2024

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February 1, 2024

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## **Impaired Driving Behavioral Interventions around the Globe**

March 13, 2024

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May 12-15, 2024

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## **ITE Canada Conference 2024**

June 9-12, 2024

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