

Statistics from the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area

The Impact of Marijuana in Colorado

Report dated August 2013

The impact of the legalization of marijuana for medical and recreation use in Colorado and Washington serve as good sources of information on the impact of legalizing marijuana. These statistics target the experience during medical marijuana expansion in Colorado.

Summary of Statistics

Medical Marijuana Expansion 2009-2012

Medical marijuana expansion and recreational use era 2012-Present

Driving Fatalities: From 2006 to 2011, traffic fatalities decreased in Colorado 16 percent, but fatalities involving drivers testing positive for marijuana increased 114 percent.

Colorado Youth Marijuana Use: In 2011, the national average for youth 12 to 17 years old considered “current” marijuana users was 7.64 percent, which was the highest average since 1981. The Colorado average percent was 10.72.

Colorado Adult Marijuana Use: In 2001, the national average for young adults ages 18-25 considered current marijuana users was at 18.7 percent. The Colorado average was 27.26 percent.

Colorado Emergency Room – Marijuana Admissions: From 2005 through 2008 there was an average of 741 visits per year to the emergency rooms in Colorado for marijuana-related incidents involving youth. That number increased to 800 visits per year between 2009 and 2011.

Colorado Marijuana-Related Exposure Cases: From 2005 through 2008, the yearly average number of marijuana-related exposures for children ages 0 to 5 years was 4. For 2009 through 2012, that number increased 200 percent to an average of 12 per year.

Diversion of Colorado Marijuana (General): From 2005 to 2008, compared to 2009 to 2012, interdiction seizures involving Colorado marijuana quadrupled from an average per year of 52 to 242. During the same period, the average number of pounds of Colorado marijuana seized per year increased 77 percent from an average of 2,220 to 3,937 pounds. A total of 7,008 pounds was seized in 2012.