



MARIJUANA – IMPACTS EVERY ASPECT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Mental illness, physical health, crime, traffic safety and young people

By Roger Morgan, Exec Director, Coalition for A Drug-Free California

Because marijuana is fat soluble it stays one's system for up to thirty days, and impairs memory, judgment and motor functions for up to 24 hours after one joint. A pilot in a simulator couldn't safely land an airplane 24 hours after one joint with THC content of 1 to 4%. (Leirer VO et.al.) Today pot is 2 to 15 times stronger.

- **Drugged Driving** – Drugged driving is 7 times more prevalent than drunk driving. 26.9% of seriously injured drivers test positive for pot. Recent studies in British Columbia show 10.4% of drivers tested positive for drugs – 49.4% marijuana. 8.3% for cocaine and pot. The U.S. cost in damages is over \$33 billion. (www.stopdruggeddriving.com). Driving privileges should be revoked for anyone who smokes marijuana regularly. 33% of drivers arrested at the scene of an accident test positive for pot, and another 12 percent test positive for both pot and cocaine. Pot users imperil themselves and others and shouldn't drive.

- **Crime** – In some areas like Chicago, 87% of arrestees of all crimes test positive for drugs, 40% for marijuana alone. Contrary to propaganda from pro-pot advocates, only .3% of prisoners are incarcerated for simple possession. The reality is, people who smoke pot and other drugs are often unemployed, or underemployed, and have to turn to crime to provide for basic necessities and to feed their habit. Marijuana alters the mind, is a gateway to other drugs, and often leads to mental illness. Illegal dispensaries and marijuana grow operations are often the scene of robberies and homicides.

- **Smoking Crude Marijuana** – Laboratory tests on “medical fraud marijuana” reveal pesticide levels that are literally hundreds of times above the legal limits. Unlike legitimate, legal medicines, there are no labels to indicate the harms, and no way of knowing the THC content, or levels of fungus, mold and pesticides. In short, it's like Russian Roulette.

- **Medical Fraud Marijuana** – Marijuana delivers myriad harms to physical and mental health, like cancer, birth defects, respiratory problems, impairment to the immune system, and can cause mental illness. For the 2% who really do have a chronic, terminal disease, the benefits may outweigh the harms. The 98% with “medical marijuana” ID cards for recreational use subject themselves to potential harm.

- **Memory Impairment and Physical Development** - Marijuana affects the areas of the brain that are important for learning and memory, body movement, control and coordination leading to impairments in short-term memory, attention, judgment, coordination, balance and altered perception of time. Individuals who start using before 17 may later suffer from cognitive impairment, particularly with respect to memory and attention. 65.4% of treatment admissions involving kids less than 18 cited marijuana as the primary cause, more than all other drugs and alcohol combined. 20% was for alcohol.

Marijuana is not safer than alcohol. As with tobacco, nobody dies from overdose. But the altered mental state of users leads to accidents, domestic violence, birth defects, mental illness and a host of health problems.

The Cleveland fire in Southern California, for example, which killed 5 fire fighters and cremated thousands of animals was started by a hunter whose bong pipe was found at the scene. A teenager in Red Lake, Minnesota whose “gal of choice” was marijuana shot and killed nine people. A bus driver high on marijuana left the road and killed 22 people in the Northwest. In February 2010 three teenagers drowned in Florida when the 16 year old driver backed up 250 yards at high speed and ended up in a canal. In March

2010 a 24 year driver caused 13 accidents in one mile before a head on collision, hit an officer in the face, then justified it all with a “medical marijuana ID card. A beautiful young La Jolla girl drove off a cliff and died in 2006 after smoking pot with friends. Pot smokers aren’t safe.