

Media Release

Ontario's Police Leaders Launch *Drive Safe!* Campaign

Chiefs Highlight Potential Impact of Cannabis Legalization, Including Unknown Operational Impact on Police Services

For Immediate Release: May 15, 2018

(Toronto, ON) – Ontario's police leaders today launched the 2018 *Drive Safe!* Campaign, emphasizing the need for motorists to answer the campaign theme of “*Who is in Control?*” of vehicles with a strong “I am!” The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) kicked off its annual road safety campaign during Canada Road Safety Week by unveiling a new information road safety booklet featuring:

- Driver over-reliance on automatic safety systems versus being fully vigilant of road and traffic conditions;
- Impaired and distracted driving;
- Distraction due to in-car and mobile technologies, and
- Ride-sharing services and personal/public safety issues.

Ontario's police leaders are also warning the public that the legalization and regulation of cannabis requires motorists to have extra care on the roads.

“Drug impaired driving is already an issue. With legalization and regulation of cannabis, we expect that based on the experience in other jurisdictions, drug impaired driving will increase,” said Chief Superintendent Chuck Cox (Ontario Provincial Police), OACP Traffic Committee Co-Chair. “This is not a new issue to police. We are already dealing with it and have people trained as Drug Recognition Evaluators (DREs) and to conduct Standardized Field Sobriety Tests (SFST).”

The OACP notes that while Provincial and Federal legislation has and is being developed that will act as a deterrent and provide police with powers to investigate and arrest drug impaired drivers, it is unclear how legalization will impact police from a day-to-day operational perspective, including how it will affect police agencies' budgets. Ontario police leaders remain concerned that federal funding for police to deal with the anticipated impact of legalized cannabis may not be sufficient when it comes to police training, procurement, and operational needs moving forward.

The *Drive Safe!* Campaign supports the efforts of police services that promote road safety throughout the year.

“Police services are working with community partners to prioritize safety by creating safer roads, slower speeds, improved vehicle design, and education and enforcement of the laws to support safer driving behaviour,” said Superintendent Scott Baptist (Toronto Police Service), OACP Traffic Committee Co-Chair. “Toronto Police Service has partnered with the City of Toronto in the implementation of Vision Zero, a five-year road safety plan that is based on the concept that collisions are going to happen, but collisions that kill or seriously injure roads users are unacceptable.”

The 2018 OACP Drive Safe campaign is supported by the following community partners: Accident Support Services International, ArriveAlive.org, The Beer Store, Canadian Tire GAS+, Canpar Courier, Cox Automotive Canada, Facedrive, Green Relief, Molson Coors, and Smart Serve Ontario.



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To download our new
Drive Safe! booklet,
visit www.oacp.ca

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#CanadaRoadSafetyWeek

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