

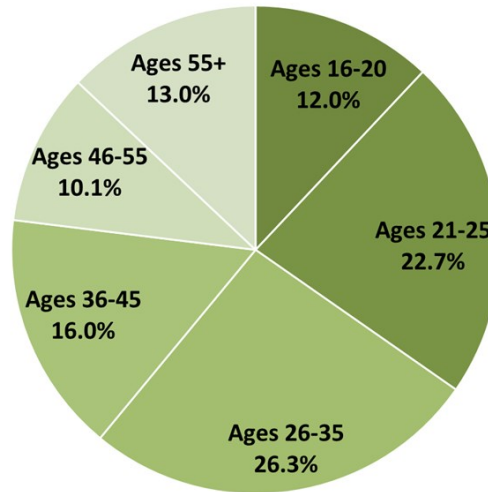


Cannabis Involvement Among Drivers in Fatal Crashes

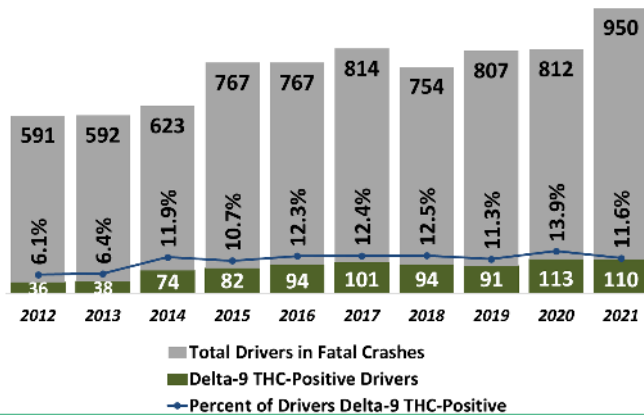
Trends show fatal crashes involving drivers testing positive for delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) have remained mostly stable since an increase in 2014 following the launch of the recreational marijuana market. However, 2020 had the highest number in history of drivers in fatal crashes positive for delta-9 THC. Approximately 45% of drivers were tested for drugs 2019-2021. In 2021, over 80% of delta-9 THC positive drivers in fatal crashes were also positive for alcohol or other drugs.

I care, because 907 people have died in Washington since 2012 in crashes involving delta-9 THC-positive drivers, nearly one in every five traffic deaths.

Delta-9 THC Positive Drivers in Fatal Crashes 2012-2021



Delta-9 THC-Positive Drivers In Fatal Crashes

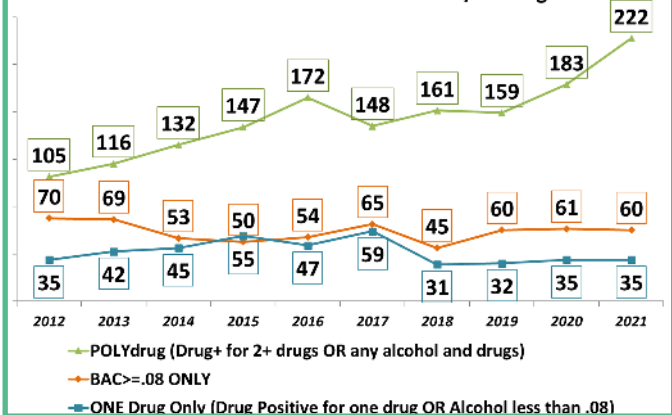


Poly-Drug¹ Drivers are the most common type of impaired driver involved in fatal crashes. Nearly three of every four delta-9 THC positive drivers were also positive for other drugs and/or alcohol. For the first time in 2012 and continuing since, drivers who had consumed multiple drugs became more prevalent than fatal crash-involved drivers who had consumed only alcohol or were positive for just one drug.

Did you know?

- ⇒ Delta-9 THC drivers also exhibited other high-risk behaviors, such as speeding (43%), not wearing a seat belt (32%), and being distracted (18%).
- ⇒ More than one-third of drivers positive for delta-9 THC were between the ages of 16 and 25.
- ⇒ The majority (80%) of delta-9 THC-positive drivers in fatal crashes were male.
- ⇒ Cannabis and alcohol is the most common combination of poly-drugs among drivers in fatal crashes. Overall, alcohol (alone or in combination with other drugs) is three times more prevalent among drivers in fatal crashes than delta-9 THC.

Number of Drivers in Fatal Crashes Under the Influence of Alcohol and/or Drugs



Poly-Drug and Drug Positive Drivers:

The Washington Coded Fatal Crash (CFC) files currently only include specified results for alcohol (BAC) cannabinoids (delta-9 THC and Carboxy-THC ng/ml). All other drugs are only coded as being present (positive for other drugs) and may include some non-impairing drugs and metabolites. The WTSC is undergoing efforts to improve the quality and accuracy of other drug information.



Cannabis Involvement Among Drivers in Fatal Crashes

Drivers in Fatal Crashes	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL
Total Drivers in Fatal Crashes	591	592	623	767	767	814	754	807	812	950	7,477
Drivers Tested For Drugs	345	373	343	396	419	395	383	365	366	409	3,794
Drivers NOT Tested For Drugs	246	219	280	371	348	419	371	442	446	541	3,683
Percent of Drivers Tested for Drugs	58.4%	63.0%	55.1%	51.6%	54.6%	48.5%	50.8%	45.2%	45.1%	43.1%	50.7%
Drivers Positive for Any Cannabis	63	59	88	92	109	113	102	99	124	123	972
Percent of Tested Drivers Cannabis-Positive	18.3%	15.8%	25.7%	23.2%	26.0%	28.6%	26.6%	27.1%	33.9%	30.1%	25.6%
Percent of Total Drivers Cannabis-Positive	10.7%	10.0%	14.1%	12.0%	14.2%	13.9%	13.5%	12.3%	15.3%	12.9%	13.0%
Drivers Positive For Delta-9 THC	36	38	74	82	94	101	94	91	113	110	833
Percent of Tested Drivers Delta-9 THC-Positive	10.4%	10.2%	21.6%	20.7%	22.4%	25.6%	24.5%	24.9%	30.9%	26.9%	22.0%
Percent of Total Drivers Delta-9 THC-Positive	6.1%	6.4%	11.9%	10.7%	12.3%	12.4%	12.5%	11.3%	13.9%	11.6%	11.1%
Cannabis Metabolite-positive (no Delta-9 THC)	27	21	14	10	15	12	8	8	11	13	139
Percent of Cannabis-Positive Drivers Delta-9 THC-Positive	57.1%	64.4%	84.1%	89.1%	86.2%	89.4%	92.2%	91.9%	91.1%	89.4%	85.7%
Delta-9 THC Under <5ng/ml	12	18	36	36	46	39	42	38	50	55	372
Delta-9 THC Over >5ng/ml	23	19	38	42	44	59	47	50	62	54	438
Delta-9 THC Level Unknown	1	1	0	4	4	3	5	3	1	1	23
Delta-9 THC & Alcohol \geq .08	14	19	28	37	41	42	39	44	46	54	364
Percent Delta-9 THC & Alcohol \geq .08	38.9%	50.0%	37.8%	45.1%	43.6%	41.6%	41.5%	48.4%	40.7%	49.1%	43.7%
Delta-9 THC & Alcohol \leq .079	1	5	9	9	4	11	9	9	16	7	80
Percent Delta-9 THC & Alcohol \leq .079	2.8%	13.2%	12.2%	11.0%	4.3%	10.9%	9.6%	9.9%	14.2%	6.4%	9.6%
Delta-9 THC & Any Alcohol	15	24	37	46	45	53	48	53	62	61	444
Percent Delta-9 THC & Any Alcohol	41.7%	63.2%	50.0%	56.1%	47.9%	52.5%	51.1%	58.2%	54.9%	55.5%	53.3%
Delta-9 THC & Other Drugs	11	11	27	27	36	30	32	30	49	46	299
Percent Delta-9 THC & Other Drugs	30.6%	28.9%	36.5%	32.9%	38.3%	29.7%	34.0%	33.0%	43.4%	41.8%	35.9%
Delta-9 THC ONLY	13	8	19	24	28	31	29	22	25	21	220
Delta-9 THC & Other Alcohol or Drugs	23	30	55	58	66	70	65	69	88	89	613
Percent Delta-9 THC & Other Alcohol or Drugs	63.9%	78.9%	74.3%	70.7%	70.2%	69.3%	69.1%	75.8%	77.9%	80.9%	73.6%

Data Sources:

Washington Coded Fatal Crash (CFC) Files, Washington Traffic Safety Commission
Toxicology Reports, Washington State Patrol

For more information, please contact (360) 725-9860. <https://wtsc.wa.gov/research-data/>