

THE GROWING RISK OF CANNABIS-IMPAIRED DRIVING — AND HOW EMPLOYERS CAN RESPOND OVERVIEW

A new report presented at the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Clinical Congress 2025 found that over 40% of drivers killed in motor vehicle crashes tested positive for active THC in their blood, with average levels exceeding 30 nanograms per milliliter — far above state-defined impairment thresholds. The findings underscore a growing public health and workplace safety threat tied to cannabis use, particularly as legalization expands across the United States.

For employers, these findings have direct implications. As cannabis becomes more socially normalized, its residual effects on judgment, reaction time, and alertness raise serious safety concerns—especially for workers in safety-sensitive industries such as transportation, construction, manufacturing, and utilities.

Key Findings from the American College of Surgeons Study

- 41.9% of deceased drivers in Ohio's Montgomery County tested positive for active THC between 2019–2024.
- Average THC blood concentration: 30.7 ng/mL—substantially higher than the legal impairment limit in most states (2–5 ng/mL).
- No decline in cannabis positivity after recreational legalization in 2023, proving that legalization has not mitigated the risk.
- THC presence reflects recent use, not residual traces—indicating those individuals were likely impaired while driving.

Researchers emphasize that messaging on cannabis-impaired driving has not kept pace with legalization campaigns. Public health leaders are calling for stronger education and prevention efforts that mirror long-standing warnings against drunk driving. Employers must recognize that similar logic applies within the workplace. Cannabis-impaired work performance can compromise not only productivity but also safety and compliance.

Implications for Employers

The study exposes a critical knowledge gap in how organizations identify and respond to cannabis impairment. Despite growing social acceptance, THC use remains a serious safety risk, particularly where vigilant attention or physical coordination is required.

Employers face a dual challenge: ensuring compliance with evolving legalization laws while maintaining safe, productive workplaces. This balance demands impairment education programs that teach supervisors to recognize, respond to, and document signs of impairment without relying solely on drug testing.

How Advanced Training Products (ATP) Helps Employers Stay Ahead

Advanced Training Products (ATP) provides Workplace Impairment Risk Management solutions designed to address exactly this issue. Through science-based training and tools, ATP equips organizations to safeguard worker health, reduce liability, and enhance compliance under *Total Worker Health®* frameworks.

ATP's leading resources include:

- Workplace Impairment Recognition & Evaluation (WIRE) Training for supervisors — focused on identifying behavioral and physiological signs of impairment from substances including cannabis, alcohol, and other drugs.
- Workplace Awareness Impairment Training (WAIT) for employees — emphasizing personal responsibility, awareness, and peer support in maintaining a safe environment.
- Anonymous Impairment Hotlines — providing confidential reporting pathways that encourage early intervention and reinforce a culture of safety.
- Automated Notifications for Supervisors — ensuring timely reporting and documentation of potential issues in real time.

Together, these offerings provide a cost-effective, proactive approach for employers to mitigate risks highlighted by the ACS's latest findings. By embedding awareness and early response systems within daily operations, ATP helps organizations protect not only their workforce but also their reputations, insurers, and customers.

The Road Ahead

The ACS study presents compelling evidence that cannabis impairment is not a theoretical or isolated concern—it is a measurable and persistent risk affecting both roads and workplaces. Employers have an opportunity, and an obligation, to lead the response with evidence-based training and prevention solutions.

As cannabis legalization continues to evolve, companies that implement comprehensive impairment awareness programs today will be better positioned to protect employees tomorrow.

Contact us today at Solutions@AdvancedTrainingProducts.com with any questions about WIRE Certified Training™ or visit our website: <http://www.AdvancedTrainingProducts.com/> to get started!

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