

Study: Pot use doesn't increase car crashes

By David Shepardson, Detroit News

A government study released late Friday found no evidence that marijuana use leads to a higher risk of getting into a traffic crash.

But safety advocates believe it is still dangerous to drive after smoking significant amounts of marijuana, and the government plans more testing.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said a 20-month survey of drivers in 2013 and 2014 found that while drinking dramatically raises the chance of a crash, there was no evidence that marijuana use is statistically significant in boosting wreck rates.

The agency said the issue is of growing importance in the wake of marijuana being legalized in Colorado, Oregon, Alaska and Washington state for recreational use.

The report's findings were based on two surveys. The National Roadside Survey, which collected information from volunteer drivers at 300 research checkpoints across the U.S., and a second study – the largest of its kind ever conducted – that assessed whether marijuana use by drivers is associated with greater risk of crashes. That study, in Virginia, gathered data over 20 months from more than 3,000 drivers who were in crashes, as well as a comparison group of 6,000 drivers who did not crash.

Read the whole story