

NEWS RELEASE

Traffic collisions are at an all time high during long weekends.

EDMONTON, June 26, 2013 – As Albertans get ready for the July long weekend, traffic safety professionals in the Capital Region want to remind drivers that it can be a dangerous time to be on the roads. Historically, long weekends end with too many deadly collisions.

“Even one death on Alberta roads this long weekend is one too many,” says Sgt. Chris Narbonne of Strathcona RCMP and Chair of the Capital Region Intersection Safety Partnership (CRISP). “The personal tragedy felt by those left behind is enormous and the disturbing part is that it doesn’t have to happen.”

The 2013 May long weekend alone saw 13 road users lose their lives in 12 crashes and 54 Albertans suffered serious injuries in 36 collisions. Of the 12 fatal collisions:

- Four occurred in an intersection
- One was an off-road motorcycle
- One involved a cyclist
- One involved a child on a patio
- Two involved pedestrians
- Alcohol/Drugs are suspected in three
- Seatbelts were not worn in two

“Given the alarming tragedy on Alberta roads every long weekend, now is the time to remind drivers to make safe, smart decisions this weekend to help keep our roads safe,” explains Narbonne. “If as a driver you are impaired or distracted then don’t drive. Stay within the speed limit, stop at red lights and stop signs, and focus on the road. Collisions are preventable.”

Albertans are also encouraged to ensure that all occupants are buckled up and to watch for motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians. The warmer weather means that more people are out cycling and walking and collisions with these road users often results in death or serious injury. A long weekend is for families to celebrate together, not to suffer devastating loss.

The cost of these collisions also carries a hefty price tag. According to a 2010 CRISP commissioned study it is estimated that each fatal collision costs about \$180,000 and an injury collision costs almost \$40,000. That means that during the 2013 May long weekend alone, the 48 most serious collisions cost Albertans more than \$3.5 million dollars.

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“While \$3.5 million dollars over a long weekend is a staggering figure, it’s really only a small part of the overall cost,” says Narbonne. “That total reflects direct costs like property damage, health services, legal costs and lost productivity. But collisions cost us so much more. We also pay indirect costs like grief, pain and suffering.”

Since 2001, CRISP has worked together to promote intersection safety in the Capital Region. CRISP members include the City of Edmonton, Strathcona County, City of St. Albert, City of Leduc, City of Spruce Grove, City of Fort Saskatchewan, Parkland County, Edmonton Police Service, St. Albert RCMP, Strathcona County RCMP, Alberta Transportation Office of Traffic Safety and Alberta Health Services. CRISP initiatives integrate research, education, engineering and enforcement strategies and target four priorities at intersections: red light violations, speed, pedestrian safety and high crash locations.

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For more information about CRISP, or to view the Cost of Collision report, visit www.drivetolive.ca