

## **Los Angeles Personal Injury Lawyers at Freeman & Freeman, LLP Warn of an Increase in Fatal Car Accidents Involving Drivers Under the Influence of Marijuana**

*The two lead attorneys at the Personal Injury Law Firm of Freeman & Freeman caution that accidents involving drivers under the influence of marijuana may be on the rise and that such accidents may, increasingly, involve catastrophic injury or wrongful death.*

Los Angeles, CA. ([PRWEB](#)) February 24, 2014 -- Stan and Steven Freeman are personal injury attorneys who have handled hundreds of car accident cases in Los Angeles over the last three decades. Though they represent victims who have been injured in a wide-range of scenarios, they have a particular focus on car accident cases. "Over the last several years we have noticed a higher number of car accidents that have involved a driver who was under the influence of marijuana. " Stan Freeman says. And, says Steven Freeman, "injury accidents that involve drugs or alcohol are often extremely catastrophic since drivers whose faculties are diminished may cause accidents without ever taking any evasive action. Driving while intoxicated or high often leads to fatal accidents because the driver may not even brake before impact." There is data that justifies the attorneys' concerns.

A [new study](#), "Trends in Alcohol and Other Drugs Detected in Fatally Injured Drivers in the United States, 1999–2010," published in the American Journal of Epidemiology on January 29, 2014 indicates that drivers high on marijuana are making the road a more dangerous place to be.

Researchers analyzed data gathered between 1999 and 2010 from six states: Hawaii, Illinois, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, West Virginia and California. They found that the number of fatal car accidents involving a driver under the influence of alcohol remained stable over that time but that the number of fatal accidents involving drivers under the influence of other drugs increased dramatically with marijuana being the drug most commonly involved.

According to the study, in 1999, 16.6% of car accidents in these states involved drivers who were on drugs at the time of a fatal car accident. In 2010, that percentage had risen to 28.3%. Though these data only include results from six states, there is reason to believe that the entire nation has seen an increase in fatal [auto accidents](#) caused by drivers impaired by drugs. Of the accidents included in the data, the most commonly detected drug was marijuana.

In the data included in the study, approximately 4% of the drivers who caused fatal accidents were under the influence of marijuana in 1999 in the six states. By 2010, that number had more than tripled. 12% of drivers under the influence of drugs at the time of their fatal crash had traces of marijuana in their bloodstream.

"We can't say exactly why this trend has emerged recently but it certainly is a public health risk that is likely to get worse," Steven Freeman says. "If someone is injured or killed by a driver under the influence of pot, we can hold the responsible party accountable but more effort should be made at the legislative level to dissuade driving while high."

Stan Freeman adds, "If the law was being violated at the time of a car crash, punitive damages may be available to an injured victim or the family of a person killed by a driver high on marijuana. At Freeman & Freeman, we

have a long history of maximizing compensation for our clients. This may be accomplished by holding multiple parties accountable and seeking punitive damages. But if more people knew of the risks and more effort was made to keep the streets safe, perhaps there would be fewer tragedies."

"Our goal," Steven Freeman says, "is to get justice and fair compensation for our clients, but we also want to call attention to public health risks. Law enforcement officials, state and federal lawmakers and the general public need to be aware of the dangers related to driving while under the influence of pot. As marijuana becomes more and more mainstream, the public needs to be made aware of the risks."

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