

Injury Control ALBERTA



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Injury Control Alberta
ISSN 1481-8817

A monthly publication of the Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research
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SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Vol. 9, No. 6 February 2007

Street racing

By John Fisher, Grant Program Coordinator, Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research

On December 15, 2006 Bill C-19 received Royal Assent and came into force. The new law makes street racing a crime and provides for stiffer penalties for those convicted of the offense.

"Street racers threaten public safety and, in some cases, tragically take innocent lives. Street racing is not about kids having fun. It is a reckless and dangerous activity that has no place in Canadian communities," said Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada Vic Toews.

Bill C-19 amends the Criminal Code to create targeted, new offences to specifically combat street racing. These new offences include increased maximum punishments and escalating mandatory driving prohibitions for those convicted of street racing. For an online version of the legislation, visit www.parl.gc.ca.

The proliferation of street racing during the 1990s led to serious injuries and loss of life among both participants and spectators. The victims included bystanders and even police officers. While it is difficult to obtain precise figures about street racing, it is known that the practice is growing. In the United States, according to figures from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, street racing caused 125 deaths in 2004.

Street racing has claimed numerous victims across Canada, notably in Vancouver, Edmonton, Moose Jaw, Regina, Winnipeg, Montréal and Sackville. In the Toronto region 35 people have died since 1999. There were an estimated 10 deaths from street racing in Canada in the first half of 2006.

In Edmonton in August 2004, an elderly pedestrian was killed by the driver of an out of control street racing Corvette.

About one week later a similar crash claimed the life of a Kelowna woman. Last July a 20-year-old Edmonton male driver was involved in a collision that resulted in serious injury of the driver and the male passenger after a BMW involved in a street race went out of control and crashed into a car dealership.

A U.S. study comparing the characteristics of street racing drivers to other drivers involved in fatal crashes reported that street racers were more likely to be in their teens, male, have previous crashes and driving violations as well as be impaired at the time of the crash.

Last summer in a move to draw attention to the problem, the York Regional Police and the Ontario Attorney General crushed two so-called "Hot Wheels" cars under the wheels and bucket of a giant front-end loader. As a result of street racing incidents these cars were forfeited for speeding and dangerous driving under the Ontario Civil Remedies Act. This law allows police to seize and destroy property used in illegal activities.

A variant of street racing has been invented – the "hat race" or "cannonball run." Money is put into a hat, which is put in a location that is kept secret until just before the race starts. The first participant to get there wins the money. No holds are barred. The drivers run red lights, ignore stop signs and disregard traffic safety laws. These races reflect the general attitude of recklessness that prevails among street racing participants.

Under the new legislation the minimum driving ban for a first offense would be one year, for a second offense 2 years and for subsequent offenses a minimum of 3 years. In the case where someone is killed, there would be a lifetime ban from driving. The legislation would also allow

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Updates, news and resources

Farewell and thank you

After many years as the Director of ACICR, we say good-bye to Dr. Louis Francescutti. Dr. Francescutti has worked passionately as an advocate for injury control provincially, nationally and internationally. His past accomplishments include establishment of the Injury Prevention Centre in the late 1980's, development of software that enables emergency response personnel to track injuries and the creation of the multimedia injury prevention program for youth – HEROES. His contribution to the injury control field and ACICR is sincerely appreciated. Dr. Francescutti, now Director Emeritus, remains on the faculty of the Department of Public Health Sciences within the School of Public Health.

The Data-Day World of Injury Research Workshop

March 22 & 23, 2007

ACICR is offering a two day injury research workshop designed to help policy makers, managers, researchers, graduate students and practitioners make sense of different kinds of injury data and how the data can be combined to provide an accurate, detailed and useful construction of injury.

Drs. Don Schopflocher, Linda Carroll, Don Voaklander and Peter Rothe will provide "actual" data, information on data bases, relevant examples and illustrations of data analysis and interpretation, hands-on exercises and case studies. The interactive format will provide an enjoyable learning opportunity for everyone. For more information on the workshop or to register visit the ACICR website at www.med.ualberta.ca/acicr and select "Updates."

Adults, bike helmets and the law

By John Fisher, Grant Program Coordinator, Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research

In a recently published study of bike helmet use conducted two years after Alberta's mandatory use legislation for under 18 year olds, researchers reported significantly increased use of bike helmets among children and youth. For those over 18 years however, helmet use was virtually unaffected.

A team of researchers led by Dr. Brent Hagel of the University of Calgary's Faculty of Medicine, conducted observational studies in Edmonton from July to August 2004 (post-legislation). The data were compared with results of a similar ACICR supported survey completed at the same locations and days in July to August 2000 (pre-legislation).

One result reported in the study was that the overall prevalence of helmet use increased from 43 per cent in 2000 to 53 per cent in 2004. Helmet use increased threefold in those younger than 18, but remained level (from 49% to 48%) in those 18 and older.

According to 2004 Alberta Transportation data 613 cyclists were

injured or killed on Alberta roadways. Forty percent of those were under the age of 20.

Evidence indicates that bike helmets prevent head and face injuries and can reduce fatal injuries by 73 per cent. Helmets have been found to be effective in crashes involving motor vehicles, reducing the risk of head injury by 69 per cent.

As noted in the study, since children riding with helmeted adults are almost 10 times more likely to be wearing helmets than children riding with non-helmeted adult companions, policymakers should consider extending current children-only helmet legislation to include adults.

Source:

Hagel BE, Rizkallah JW, Lamy A, Belton KL, Jhangri GS, Cherry N, Rowe BH. Bicycle helmet prevalence two years after the introduction of mandatory use legislation for under 18 year olds in Alberta, Canada. *Inj Prev.* 2006; 12(4): 262-5.

Injury Control Alberta readership survey

By Lynda McPhee, Education Coordinator, Alberta Centre for Injury Control &

ACICR would like to thank our readers who completed the *Injury Control Alberta* Readership Survey. In total there were 92 responses. Of those who responded:

- 88 per cent indicated they were very satisfied or extremely satisfied with the newsletter overall.
- 64 per cent ranked data and statistics as being the first or second article type of interest. This was followed by recent research at 60 per cent and profile of programs/initiatives at 41 per cent.
- 91 per cent indicated they use the information from the newsletter to keep up to date. 80 per cent indicated they use the information for general information awareness and 69 per cent share the information in the newsletter with co-workers.
- 64 per cent indicated they would like to see more research oriented articles, followed by statistically based articles (61%), editorials (59%), and community program updates (57%).
- Over half (56%) indicated that they have been receiving the newsletter for more than 4 years.
- 86 per cent indicated they read all or most of the newsletter.
- 88 per cent indicated they would like to get the newsletter every month or every other month.

We appreciate the feedback received from the survey and will endeavor to continue to meet the needs of our readers. To view more detailed results from the survey, visit our website at www.med.ualberta.ca/acicr and select "Newsletters."

Community Injury Control Fund Cycle 7 results

The ACICR is pleased to report that at the end of Grant Cycle 7, 99.5 per cent of the budget allocation for the Community Injury Control Fund (CICF) was awarded. The CICF Review Committee approved a total of 18 Category A (larger) project proposals with a total value of \$201,195. The average grant award for these projects was \$11,178.

Nineteen Category B (smaller) project proposals were also approved including the participation subsidy awards made for planning groups to attend the *On Solid Ground* conference. The average grant award for smaller projects was \$2,278 for a total of \$20,500 plus \$17,410 for *On Solid Ground* participation.

The CICF program ended Grant Cycle 7 with an unexpended balance of \$1,173.

Deadlines for Cycle 8 are June 1 and November 1, 2007 for Category A projects with consultation deadlines of May 15 and October 15. Category B grants will be accepted at any time up to the end of December with a consultation deadline of December 15, 2007. Revised Cycle 8 grant application forms will be available on the ACICR website at the end of February.

For more information contact John Fisher, Grant Program Coordinator at john.fisher@ualberta.ca.

Burn Awareness Week (February 4-10, 2007)

Each year thousands of Albertans suffer from burn injuries. A burn is defined as damage to the skin and underlying tissue caused by heat, chemicals or electricity. Children and older adults, by virtue of their thinner skin, sustain severe burns at lower temperatures and in less time than younger adults.

Up to 80 per cent of burn injuries happen in or around the home. Burns are most commonly the result of fire and scalds from liquid or steam. The vast majority of burn injuries are preventable. To learn more about burn facts and prevention go to www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/fco_index.htm.

Street racing (continued from page 1)

judges to impose life sentences on drivers whose street racing resulted in death.

Sources:

Department of Justice Canada, Press Release.

www.justice.gc.ca/en/news/nr/2006/doc_31964.html

Department of Justice Canada, Press Release.

<http://news.gc.ca/cfmx/view/en/index.jsp?articleid=220269>

Valiquet D. Bill C-19: An Act to amend the Criminal Code (Street Racing) and to make a Consequential Amendment to the Corrections and Conditional Release Act.

www.parl.gc.ca/common/bills_ls.asp?lang=E&ls=c19&source=library_prb&Parl=39&Ses=1

Street racing: Too fast, too furious. CBC News Online June 15, 2006.

www.cbc.ca/news/background/crime/street-racing.html

Edmonton Police Service Media Release.

www.police.edmonton.ab.ca/Pages/Media/releases/October/06R140-2%20-%20charges%20July%20injury%20collision%20128%20Ave%20Oct23.doc

Knight S, Cook LJ, Olson LM. The fast and the fatal: street racing fatal crashes in the United States. *Inj Prev*. 2004; 10:53-55.

CALENDAR

Burn Awareness Week

Alberta Municipal Affairs, Fire Commissioner's Office
Feb. 4 – 10, 2007
Phone: (780) 644-4692
Website: www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/fco_index.htm

Designated Drivers & Other Community Based Ride Home Programs: A Critical Look

ACICR Teleconference
February 14, 2007
Phone: (780) 492-6019
Email: acicr@ualberta.ca

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week "Protect Your Moving Parts"

March 14 – 20, 2007
Phone: (613) 713-7321
Website: www.casa-acsa.ca

The Data-Day World of Injury Research Workshop

March 22 & 23, 2007
Lister Conference Centre, U of A
Phone: (780) 492-6019
Email: acicr@ualberta.ca

Partners in Injury Prevention: What's Working?

May 16 – 18, 2007
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Contact: Tara Torchia Wells
Phone: (204) 772-3133
Email: Tara@plannersplus.ca

EDMONTON II: Enhancing Safety in Home, Community and Long Term Care

May 29 – 30, 2007
The Westin
Edmonton, Alberta
Phone: (780) 436-0983
Website: www.capitalhealth.ca/YourHealth/Campaigns/EnhancingSafetyConference

Safe Kids Week – Drowning Prevention

Safe Kids Canada
May 28 – June 3, 2007
Phone: (416) 813-5118
Website: www.sickkids.ca/safekidscanada



According to the most recent data available, Alberta had the fifth highest injury death rate in Canada with a rate of 52.03 deaths per 100,000 population. This rate was higher than the overall Canadian rate of 42.27 injury deaths per 100,000 population.

The highest rate was recorded by Nunavut with a rate of 154.51 injury deaths per 100,000 population. The lowest rate was recorded by Newfoundland with a rate of 35.20 injury deaths per 100,000 population.

In 2003 Alberta also had the fifth highest injury hospital admission rate in Canada with a rate of 794.87 hospital admissions per 100,000 population. This rate was higher than the overall Canadian rate of 580.16 injury-related hospital admissions per 100,000 population.

The highest rate was recorded by the Northwest Territories with a rate of 1456.85 injury-related hospital admissions per 100,000 population. The lowest rate was recorded by Ontario with a rate of 496.09 injury-related hospital admissions per 100,000 population.

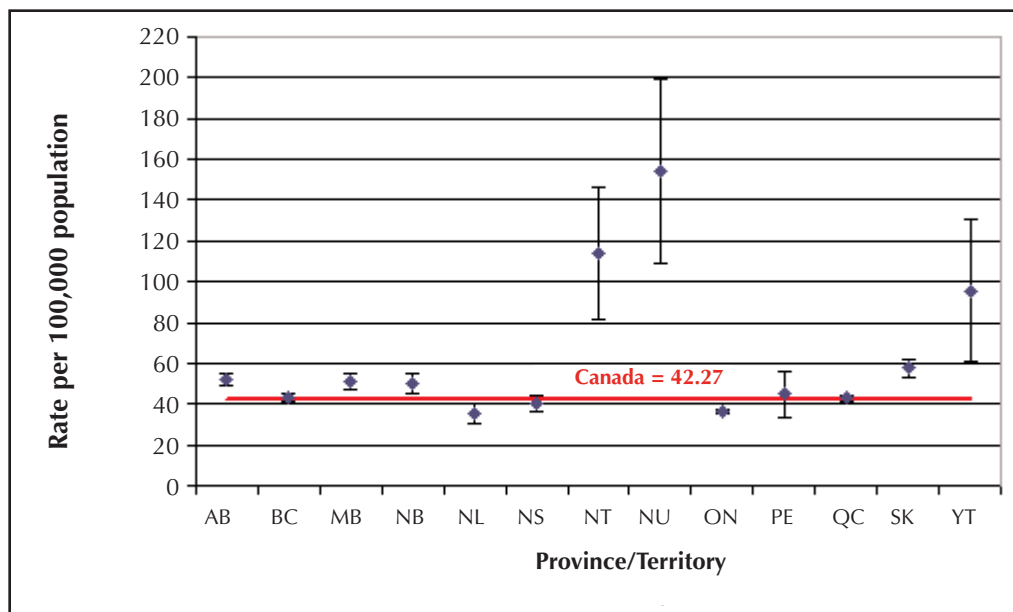
Note: as per CIHI National Trauma Registry definition, the number of injury-related hospital admissions does not include: poisonings by drugs or gases, adverse effects of drugs or medicines, medical misadventures/ complications, choking and late effects of injury.

Age-standardized using Canadian population of 2001.

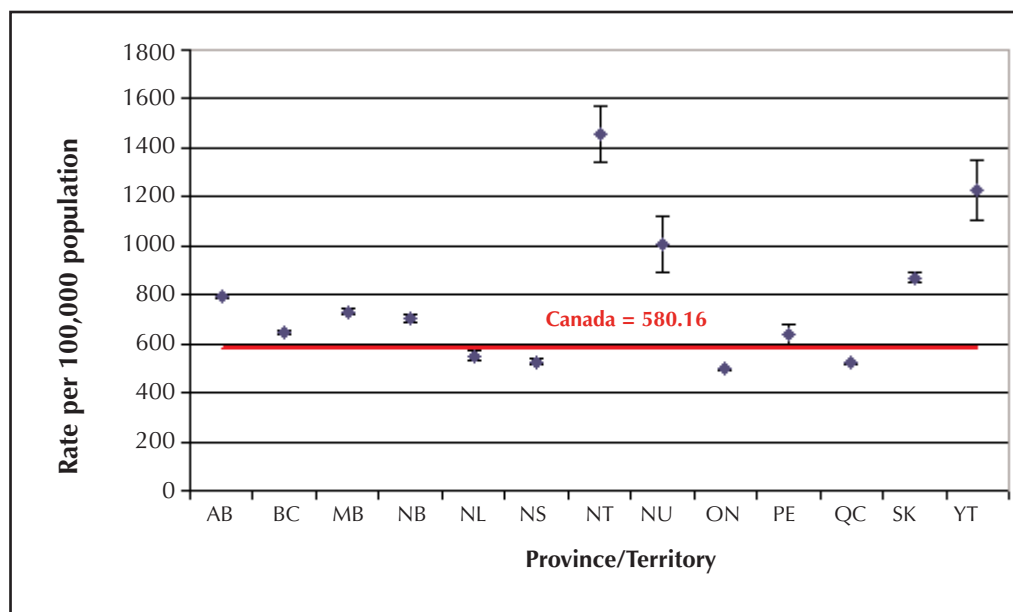


Injury death and hospital admission rates by province/territory, 2003

Injury Death Rates by Province/Territory, 2003
Age-Standardized Per 100,000 Population



Injury Hospital Admission Rates by Province/Territory, 2003
Age-Standardized Per 100,000 Population



Sources:

Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). E-Trauma. [cited 2006 Dec 18]. Available from: http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw_page=home_e

Statistics Canada. Estimates of Population, by Age group and Sex, Canada, Provinces and Territories, annual (persons unless otherwise noted). CANSIM Table 051-0001. [cited 2006 Dec 18]. Available from: http://cansim2.statcan.ca/cgi-win/cnsmcgi.pgm?Lang=E&ArrayId=510001&Array_Pick=1&Detail=1&RootDir=CII/&Result_Template=CII\CII__

Statistics Canada. Deaths, by Selected Grouped Causes, Age group and Sex, Canada, Provinces and Territories, annual. CANSIM Table 102-0551. [cited 2007 Jan 04]. Available from: http://cansim2.statcan.ca/cgi-win/cnsmcgi.exe?Lang=E&RootDir=CII/&Result_Template=CII\CII__&Array_Pick=1&ArrayId=1020551.