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Personal Injury

Steering sensors could stem tide of impaired driving cases

By AdvocateDaily.com Staff



Steering wheel technology could help prevent a spike in impaired driving-related accidents following the legalization of cannabis for recreational use, Toronto personal injury lawyer **Jasmine Daya** tells **AdvocateDaily.com**.

Yahoo News recently **reported** on a study that found U.S. states that legalized the drug saw an increase in road accidents and collisions of up to six per cent, and Daya, managing principal with **Jasmine Daya & Co**, sees no reason why this country should fare any differently.

"Canada is only the second country in the world to legalize cannabis, so there aren't many statistics to enable us to predict what will occur in terms of impaired driving," she explains. "However, I strongly believe that we will see an increase in accidents and impaired driving charges because people who were previously consuming the drug in a way to avoid being detected are less likely to care about being caught behind the wheel."

Daya says the central ambiguity in impaired driving laws creates difficulties for the average person.

"The law tells us that we can drink and drive, but only a little bit," she explains. "I think there are many people out there who have an accident because they didn't recognize that they were impaired when they got behind the wheel."

However, Daya says the expected tide of new impaired driving cases could be stemmed if steering wheel **technology**, which uses biosensors to detect alcohol on the breath, was more widely used, and adapted for the detection of cannabis.

"This is already used in many commercial vehicles, and it's shocking to me that every vehicle is not equipped with one of these sensors," Daya says. "It's a very flawed system we have, and we have to deal with a great deal of pain and suffering caused both to and by impaired motorists, so I would welcome anything that can reduce that.

With legalization so fresh, Daya says the personal injury bar is still waiting to feel the full effects. Until now, she says most of her cases involving injuries acquired due to an impaired driver either related to alcohol impairment, or some combination of alcohol and other drugs, including cannabis. But she expects that to change.

"We have yet to see what is going to occur in the personal injury world. It will take some time before cases can work their way through the system and the law addresses it," Daya adds.