

More than 160 road deaths attributed to the 'Big Four'?

The 'Big Four' were contributing factors in 168 of the 216 road deaths investigated by the OPP this year (2014). The 'Big Four' refers to the four main causal factors in motor vehicle collision deaths: distracted driving, speeding, impaired driving and lack of occupant restraint.

These four factors are the leading causes of collision deaths throughout Canada. For this reason, the OPP will be joining policing partners across the country for Operation Impact - a national road safety enforcement and education campaign endorsed by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACFP).

Speeding and distracted driving are in the lead of the four road death causal categories in OPP-investigated motor vehicle collisions. As of October 5, 2014 speed was a factor in 51 of the 168 deaths and distracted driving is in second place with 45 deaths. Lack of occupant restraint is in third place at 38 deaths and impaired driving in fourth position as a causal factor in 34 road deaths.

'Drivers have it within their means to end road deaths that fall into these four categories because these are not 'accidents' that occur through no one's wrongdoing. These collisions only occur when motorists drive aggressively, while impaired, while distracted or while they or their passengers are not buckled up. Regardless of the category, the tragic result is always related to poor driving behaviour. If drivers and passengers were more mindful of the critical role they play in changing these dangerous behaviours, the OPP and its policing partners would not have to stop them through these collective enforcement and education efforts,' said OPP Deputy Commissioner Brad Blair, Provincial Commander, Traffic Safety and Operational Support.

In support of Operation Impact, the OPP will be counting on motorists to take great care in the way they drive over the long weekend. They are also asking passengers to take care of their own safety and to speak up when in a vehicle with a driver who endangers their lives through any of these driving behaviours.

If drivers and passengers across the country collaborate with police by taking these measures on the road all year long, they can greatly contribute towards Canada's Road Safety Strategy 2015 and its vision of making Canada's roads the safest in the world.

The OPP is also reminding everyone heading into cottage country this weekend to make trail and water safety important priorities. On a positive note, road deaths associated with impaired driving, distracted driving and lack of occupant restraint, as well as marine and trail fatalities are all down from last year (2013).

All data is year-to-date (as of October 5, 2014) and applies to OPP jurisdiction:

' Impaired-related deaths: 34 in 2014 compared to 59 in 2013.

' Distraction-related deaths: 45 in 2014 compared to 68 in 2013.

' Deaths related to lack of occupant restraint: 38 in 2014 compared to 49 in 2013.

' Speed-related deaths: 51 in 2014 compared to 38 in 2013.

Marine deaths: 14 in 2014 compared to 20 in 2013.

Off-road vehicle deaths: 8 in 2014 compared to 15 in 2013.

The OPP would like to thank the many drivers, passengers and other road users, off-roaders and boaters who help the OPP keep Ontario's roads, trails and waterways safe.