



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Weld County Launches New “Marijuana is Not Harmless” Campaign

Weld County – In 2012, Colorado voters passed Amendment 64, which legalized recreational marijuana. In 2014, the first recreational marijuana dispensaries opened. Based on 2018 data from the Colorado Department of Revenue, there are over 520 recreational marijuana dispensaries, which is more than twice the number of statewide Starbucks. Despite the ease of availability and social acceptance, recreational marijuana use has a downside. The 2019 annual report, *The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado: The Impact, Volume 6*, issued by the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (RMHIDTA) reports the yearly number of emergency department visits related to marijuana have increased 54 percent since 2013; and the yearly number of hospitalizations has increased 101 percent. Traffic deaths involving drivers who tested positive for marijuana has more than doubled since legalization, resulting in one marijuana related traffic death every 3 days. Adult marijuana use in Colorado is 96 percent higher than the national average; and the past month usage for Colorado youth ages 12 and older is 78 percent higher than the national average.

The Weld County “Marijuana is Not Harmless” campaign is using outdoor billboard ads scattered along high-traffic corridors, as well as social media to reach a variety of audiences. “We acknowledge Colorado voters legalized recreational marijuana,” said Mark E. Wallace, MD, MPH, Executive Director of the Weld County Health Department. “However, the general public, and especially youth, need to understand that marijuana use is not harmless. There are consequences to driving impaired and using frequent amounts of marijuana.”

To view the data sources for the “Marijuana is Not Harmless” campaign, see the following links:

National Institute on Drug Abuse marijuana factsheet (Revised September 2019):

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana>

The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado: The Impact, Volume 6 (2019), issued by the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (RMHIDTA): <https://rmhidta.org/files/D2DF/FINAL-Volume6.pdf>

Marijuana **IS NOT** harmless.
**Use can impair your
ability to drive safely.**



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Marijuana **IS NOT** harmless:

**users report lower
satisfaction of life
and poorer mental
and physical health**



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