Driving Habits

2019 Community Health Survey of Larimer County Residents

What Is Distracted Driving?

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), distracted drivers caused 2,841 deaths in the U.S. in 2018. Distracted driving is any activity that takes the driver's attention away from the road, including using a cell phone, eating or drinking, or adjusting the stereo or navigation system. At 55 MPH, sending or reading a texts takes your eyes off the road for around 5 seconds. That is long enough to drive the length of a football field.



Technology Use and Driving

The 2019 Community Health Survey asked the following questions to gauge our community's driving habits:



While driving, how often do you...



Seatbelt Use in Larimer County



93% of Larimer County adults always wear a safety belt while riding in or driving a car, up from 89% in 2016. The national rate was 91% in 2019 (NHTSA)

Drinking and Driving

In 2019, 34% of driving deaths in Colorado involved alcohol, compared to the national average of 29% (NHTSA). Denver Trial Lawyers gathered and published crash data from 2013 to 2018 about the number of alcohol-related accidents resulting in a fatality in each Colorado county. Larimer County ranked **9th highest** in Colorado in rates of fatal alcohol related accidents per 100,000 and **2nd highest** in total number of people killed in 2019, with 101 fatal accidents and 119 deaths.

In Larimer County, after steadily decreasing from 2001 to 2016, rates of driving after having two or more drinks in the hour before driving one or more times in the past month more than doubled from 2016 (4%) to 9% in 2019.

Drinking and Driving Rates In Larimer County



Health District

78% of respondents strongly or somewhat favored a policy that would restrict the use of handheld phones while driving

of current marijuana users reported driving a car within 2-3 hours of using marijuana in the past month

Colorado Laws: Cellphone Use and Driving

Adult drivers: Regular cell phone use for voice calls is permitted. Headphones may be worn in one ear for this purpose. However, adult drivers are prohibited from manual data entry and transmission on a cell phone (i.e., to send a text message or browse the internet) while behind the wheel.

Minor drivers: Any driver under 18 years of age is prohibited from using a cell phone while driving. The prohibition includes phone calls, text messaging, or similar forms of manual data entry and transmission. See the Minor License subsection for more information about rules related to minor drivers.

Source: Colorado General Assembly

Find more data at

https://www.healthdistrict.org/research-and-evaluation-team