



PRESS RELEASE

Canadians overwhelmingly (93%) Deem Impaired Driving as a Serious Public Safety Issue and Want Governments to Act

Strong Support for Reducing Impaired Driving and Hold Offenders Accountable

Toronto, ON, January 27, 2026 - An overwhelming ninety-three percent of Canadians agree that impaired driving is a serious public safety issue, with nearly three-quarters (74%) expressing strong agreement with this view, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted for MADD Canada.

However, Canadians are divided on whether governments are doing enough to address the issue. Only forty-eight percent agree that all levels of government in Canada are sufficiently enforcing impaired driving laws, while forty-two percent disagree with this assessment.

Widespread Backing for Impairment Detection Technology

When prompted with information about alcohol ignition interlock programs for impaired drivers, which requires the driver to pass a breath test with alcohol levels below a set limit to start and continue operating their vehicle, more than nine in ten (93%) agree with the proposal that drivers who cause death while impaired should be mandated to have ignition interlocks installed in their vehicles for life, ensuring they can drive legally and with insurance.

Canadians express low awareness of a US impairment detection technology law, but a large majority support enactment of a similar law in Canada. Only one-third (34%) of Canadians were aware that legislation in the US mandates car manufacturers to integrate passive impairment detection technology in all new vehicles by 2030. However, eight in ten agree that the Canadian government should pass a similar law requiring passive impairment detection technology in new vehicles, with four in ten expressing strong agreement with this proposal.

Very High Support for Expansion of Mandatory Alcohol Screening (MAS)

Eighty-seven percent of Canadians indicate they were aware that police can demand a breath sample from any driver they lawfully stop, whether for a traffic violation such as speeding or at a sobriety checkpoint. Almost three in ten (27%) have experience with Mandatory Alcohol Screening either personally or through someone they know.





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Canadians express overwhelming support for measures that would expand police authority to demand breath samples in specific circumstances. Ninety-five percent of Canadians agree that police should be able to demand a breath sample to determine impairment from any driver involved in a collision, with sixty-six percent strongly agreeing with this measure. Eighty-nine percent agree that police should be able to demand a breath sample from anyone operating a personal vessel or boat, with fifty-five percent expressing strong agreement.

Low Awareness of Provincial/Territorial Non-Criminal BAC Limits

A significant knowledge gap exists among Canadians regarding non-criminal impaired driving thresholds at the provincial and territorial level. Just 36 percent of Canadians are aware that all provinces and territories, except Quebec, have a non-criminal threshold for impaired driving for fully licensed, non-commercial drivers, which is .05% blood alcohol concentration (BAC) (or .04% in Saskatchewan). Seven in ten (71%) Quebecers think their provincial government should implement a similar law.

Positive Messages Prevail Over Negative Ones in Boosting Support for Immediate Roadside Prohibition (IRP)

Canadians were prompted with information about Immediate Roadside Prohibition. When presented with positive and negative statements about IRP, positive statements predominantly enhance support, whereas negative statements evoke mixed reactions.

Majorities become more supportive of IRP knowing that it allows law enforcement to immediately remove impaired drivers from the road, which can lead to a reduction in alcohol-related collisions and fatalities (75%), that these programs take a fraction of the time of a criminal investigation, allowing police to remove more impaired drivers from the road, respond to other calls, and be more proactive in their enforcement of traffic safety (68%), that studies suggest the program results in reduced cases of impaired driving, as the immediacy and certainty of the consequences deters potential offenders (65%), and that IRP allows many cases to be handled administratively rather than through the courts, which decreases the burden on the judicial system (61%).

In contrast, there are mixed opinions, with the statement that since IRP is not a criminal charge, a person who receives one avoids a criminal record, and this may not adequately deter dangerous behaviour (31% more supportive, 38% less supportive, and 31% no impact on support), and with the statement that an administrative penalty system could give the impression of “decriminalizing” impaired driving (28% more supportive, 35% less supportive, and 38% no impact).

Trust in Police's Drug-Impairment Identification, Yet Tech Awareness Lags

Seventy-three percent of Canadians agree that police have the ability to detect drug-impaired drivers, but only 29 percent strongly agree with this view.





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Slightly less than half (46%) of Canadians are aware that police have the ability to use a roadside device to detect cannabis presence in drivers.

Most Say MADD Canada Campaigns Influential on Driving Behaviour

MADD Canada has strong brand recognition, with three-quarters (73%) of Canadians indicating that they have heard of MADD Canada.

Among those who have heard of MADD Canada, seventy-six percent have seen or heard MADD Canada messaging, mainly on television.

MADD Canada's campaigns have demonstrated meaningful impact on driver behaviour. Among those who have been exposed to MADD Canada messaging, fifty-eight percent report that the campaigns have had an influence on them personally or through someone they know to drive sober or plan for a sober ride.

About the Study

These are findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between November 25 and 27, 2025, on behalf of MADD Canada. For this survey, a sample of 1,985 Canadians aged 18 years and over (including 1,764 with a valid driver's licence) was interviewed. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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