

MATT BRUNER – INCREASES IN DRUG-IMPAIRED DRIVING TRANSCRIPT

[00:00]

(Peppy music plays while introductory slides show the Institute for Transportation and Iowa Department of Transportation logos and then the video title of “Increases in Drug-Impaired Driving”)

[00:06] [Speaker – Matt Bruner, Iowa Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Bureau]:

(Music quiets)

The rise in recreational and prescription drug driving issues has really come to the forefront over the last 10 years.

[00:12]

(Brief b-roll zooms in on a still image of a driver starting their vehicle with an added graphic that states “Driving while impaired by any substance can be deadly” and includes text and icons representing marijuana, other illicit drugs, prescription and over-the-counter meds, and alcohol and credited to the “Centers for Disease Control and Prevention”)

And, we’re really seeing a trend now, too, with alcohol-impaired OWIs decreasing and drug-impaired OWIs in Iowa increasing.

[00:21]

(Brief b-roll zooms out on a still image of a joint being held by a person behind the steering wheel of a vehicle that appears to be on a residential roadway with added text that states, “In 2017, about 1 in 8 high school drivers reported driving after using marijuana at least once during the past month” and credited to “CDC. 2026. Marijuana Use and Driving. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-resources/pdf/MarijuanaFactSheets-Driving-508.pdf>”)

And that could be because of increased use, but it also could be as part of an increased detection too, as more officers are trained to recognize these things.

[00:30]

(Brief b-roll zooms in on a still graphic that states, “What are effects of drugs on driving? Driving under the influence of drugs affects you and everyone around you,” showing text and images of marijuana, methamphetamine or cocaine, opioids, and sedatives with text under that describes the effects, respectively as slows reaction time and impairs judgment, aggressive and reckless behaviors, drowsiness and impaired memory, and dizziness and drowsiness and credited to “National Institute on Drug Abuse”)

When one of those things is used in combination with another drug, and probably the most common combination is alcohol with any other drug, we don't just see like a one plus one effect. We, a lot of times, see a magnifying effect of one plus one equals four.

[00:44]

(Brief b-roll zooms in on a still image of a set of keys including a car key next to marijuana with added text that states "Drug-impaired driving in the United States: 12.6 million Americans reported driving under the influence of marijuana or other illicit drugs in 2018" and credited to "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention")

There's some really neat studies out there that talk about how those magnifying effects happen in people's brains and kind of the chemistry that goes on there too. So, the impairment is absolutely increased when drugs are combined with alcohol or other drugs.

[00:58]

(Brief b-roll zooms in on a still image of a young driver handing their driver's license to a law enforcement officer outside of the driver-side window)

So, if somebody is pulled over and an officer may suspect that they're impaired by drugs, whether it's a recreational drug or prescription drug, the best solution is going to be honesty.

[01:08]

(Brief b-roll zooms out on a still image of a zoned-out young driver looking on as a law enforcement officer outside the driver-side window is writing on a form on a clipboard)

And so, that's a very important part of what our officers do roadside is check, "Hey, do we have a medical issue going on here? Do we have a drug-impairment issue going on here? Do we have an alcohol-impairment issue going on here?"

[01:17]

(Video briefly dips to black)

So yeah, so the foundation, the training our officers go through has some forks in the road.

[01:23]

(Brief b-roll zooms in on a still image of a young driver with their head in their hand as a law enforcement officer speaks to the driver through the driver-side window)

If they do see that that person's impaired, the next thing they have to look at is, is that impairment based on alcohol or drugs, or is it for something else? If it's based on alcohol and drugs, we have field sobriety testing and a process to deal with that.

[01:36]

(Brief b-roll zooms in on a still image of a young driver taking a breathalyzer test while a law enforcement officer looks at their driver's license and a smartphone)

And not all of those things equal going to jail. So, it's kind of a twofold aspect. We want to make sure that officers are recognizing the impaired drivers on the roadways, they're detecting them, they're apprehending them, and holding those folks accountable. But on the other side of it too, is we want to prevent folks from ever getting in that situation of, "Hey, if you've used this drug," or "Hey, you're prescribed this medication, you should not be driving."

[01:58]

(Video of Matt Bruner fades to black as louder peppy music resumes, while outro slides provide a disclaimer that reads, "This video was developed by the Institute for Transportation (InTrans) at Iowa State University for the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) with the purpose to provide the material for driver education instructors in Iowa. InTrans is responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the information presented herein as of May 1, 2025. Driver education instructors may use the material in its entirety or may use any of the material individually. The material is for educational purposes only. It is strictly prohibited to sell any part of this video. If any of the material is reused, please credit the Iowa DOT. For more information or questions, please contact Vania Boyd, Driver Education and Motorcycle Rider Education Manager, Iowa DOT, Vania.boyd@iowadot.us." and show the Institute for Transportation and Iowa Department of Transportation logos)