

Marijuana and Driving: A Dangerous Combination

Since the sale of recreational marijuana became legal in California in January 2018, one of the concerns has been that there would be an increase in the number of stoned drivers on the road.

Two studies released last year found that the number of car crashes went up by as much as 6 percent in other states that had legalized marijuana. Statistics in California are still being compiled, so it's not clear if that's been the case here.

What is clear is that using marijuana impairs the skills needed to be a safe driver. The National Institute on Drug Abuse has found that the use of marijuana impairs judgment, motor coordination and reaction time.

When these skills are impaired, the risk of an accident increases significantly. Too often, it results in serious and sometimes fatal injuries to drivers and passengers.

Holding negligent drivers accountable can be difficult, however. Part of the problem is that in California, there is no legal blood concentration limit for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active chemical in marijuana. There is no breathalyzer for marijuana, either. A blood test can be done, but THC can rapidly clear out of the blood in just a couple of hours, while remaining present in the brain and other fatty tissue.

Determining impairment is often a judgment call by police officers using methods like field sobriety tests. Even trained officers can have difficulty proving a driver was operating under the influence of marijuana.

If you were injured in an accident caused by a driver who may have been operating under the influence of marijuana, talk to an experienced car accident lawyer as soon as possible.

A photograph showing the interior of a car. A woman with long braids is smiling in the back seat. A man with glasses is in the driver's seat. A hand is visible in the foreground holding a brown bag. The text 'About Ridesharing and Car Accidents' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

About Ridesharing and Car Accidents

Ridesharing services such as Uber, Lyft and Carma are very popular in Walnut Creek and throughout the state, but what happens when one of their drivers causes an accident that leaves you injured? It can be complicated.

The state of California has set minimum insurance requirements that all drivers of transportation network companies (TNC) must meet. While some companies provide drivers with insurance, drivers are responsible for making sure they have the insurance coverage they need.

One of the first things the insurance company will want to know after an accident involving a ridesharing vehicle is whether the driver was on duty when the crash occurred. If the driver had a passenger in the car, was traveling to pick up a passenger or had the ridesharing app on and was waiting for a match, that driver is considered to be on duty.

If the driver was off duty at the time of the accident, that driver's personal insurance policy - which may have lower limits - is in effect.

Whether the driver was on or off duty, proving negligence in the accident can be difficult. Ridesharing drivers may deny responsibility for the crash, even if they were speeding, distracted or driving under the influence. They may even blame you.

Insurance companies may also challenge your claim. They may question the extent of your injuries or argue that the driver was not on duty.

That's why it's important to talk to an experienced car accident attorney if you've been hurt in a crash caused by a ridesharing driver. An attorney can investigate your accident, find evidence to hold negligent drivers accountable and help you recover the financial compensation you deserve.



The Responsibility of Property Owners

Every year, people get hurt while on someone else's property. They may have slipped and fell on the floor at a restaurant or supermarket. They may have been hurt when an elevator or escalator malfunctioned. Someone may have tripped over a pothole in a parking lot.

These types of accidents are often preventable, and the people who are hurt can seek financial compensation. That's because property owners have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to keep people safe, a concept known as premises liability.

Some of these steps are just common sense. For example, cleaning up spills promptly and putting up a sign warning others that the floor is slippery. Other examples include providing adequate lighting, properly maintaining elevators and escalators and putting handrails on stairways.

In general, property owners can be held responsible for damages if they knew about a condition on the property that could cause harm - or should have known about the condition (for example, by inspecting the property regularly) - and failed to take action or warn people.

Recovering compensation from negligent property owners is not a

simple process. An owner may deny doing anything wrong. Insurance companies can challenge your claim to try to avoid paying you for medical expenses and other damages.

If you are injured in a premises liability accident, talk to a personal injury lawyer as soon as you can. An attorney can take quick action to gather evidence and talk to witnesses who saw what happened. This helps build a strong case to help you recover financial compensation for your injuries.

You can learn more about premises liability accidents by watching our video at www.clancylawgroup.com/personal-injury/premises-liability.

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What To Do After An E-Scooter Accident

Electric motorized scooters – better known as e-scooters – are becoming increasingly popular in California cities.

In the past several years, scooter-sharing companies such as Bird, Lime, Jump and Spin have offered short-term rentals of e-scooters through the use of apps.

Many people like using e-scooters because of the convenience. It's faster than walking, and users don't have to worry about parking it. An operator can locate a nearby e-scooter with the app, and

when done, simply leave it on the sidewalk for the next user.

The sudden popularity of e-scooters on city streets has brought problems – and injuries.

People often operate e-scooters on already crowded sidewalks, despite the fact it's illegal, and careless operators have struck pedestrians. When e-scooters are taken out on

the roads, they increase the risk of an accident. A negligent driver can easily crash into an e-scooter operator, often resulting in serious injuries.

On the right are some tips about what to do if you were injured by an e-scooter or injured while operating one.

CALL THE POLICE

An officer will make sure everyone is safe and fill out a report that documents the accident.

GET MEDICAL ATTENTION

Do this even if you feel OK. You could be injured without realizing it. A doctor can also document your injuries.

GET THE OTHER PARTY'S INFORMATION

This includes the person's name, address, phone number and insurance information.

TALK TO WITNESSES

Be sure to get their contact information.

TAKE PHOTOS

If you have a smartphone, take photos of the accident scene.

CALL A LAWYER

Contact an attorney as soon as possible. An attorney can go over your options and make sure your rights are protected.