



Drug Tests For Cannabis Exposure Not Advisable For Infants, Study Says



Salt Lake City, UT, USA: False positive drug test results for cannabis are far more common to occur in infant urine samples than in those provided by non-infants, according to a [study](#) published online in the journal *Clinical Chemistry*.

Researchers at the University of Utah School of Medicine and ARUP drug testing laboratories in Salt Lake City investigated the rate of unconfirmed 'positive' immunoassay test results in infant and non-infant urine samples over a 52-week period.

Authors [reported](#) that positive tests for carboxy THC, a byproduct of THC screened for in immunoassay urine tests, were 59 times less likely to be confirmed in infant urine compared to non-infant urine samples. Overall, 47 percent of the infant 'positive' immunoassay urine samples

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Study: "There Is Now Clear Evidence That Cannabinoids Are Useful For The Treatment Of Various Medical Conditions"

Hurth, Germany: Scientific findings from over 100 controlled clinical trials involving either cannabis or its constituents provide "clear evidence that cannabinoids are useful for the treatment of various medical conditions," according to a just published [review](#) in the German scientific journal *Deutsches Ärzteblatt International*.

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Multiple Potential Beachheads for Legalization in Pot War Loom this November

USA: Voters in at least five states – Colorado, Massachusetts, Montana, Oregon, and Washington – and a number of municipalities, will be deciding on marijuana-specific ballot measures this November. In Massachusetts, voters will decide on Question 3, a statewide [proposal](#) that seeks to allow for the

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Cannabis, Other Illicit Drugs, Associated With "Small Or Moderate Increases In Accident Risk," Study Says

Oslo, Norway: The use of cannabis as well as various other illicit substances, poses a "small or moderate increase in accident risk," according to a systematic [review](#) and meta-analysis of studies published online in the journal *Accident Analysis and Prevention*.

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DEA: Marijuana Plant Seizures Down 35 Percent Nationwide

In The Meantime, Asset Forfeiture Reaches All Time High – Now, How Does That Happen?

Washington, DC, USA: Total seizures of cultivated cannabis plants fell an estimated 35 percent between the years 2010 and 2011, according to statistics provided by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and published in the [Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics](#).

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The Willamette Valley NORML News Report

is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit project to record and broadcast news, announcements and information about cannabis law reform.

The W-V-NORML News Report is produced by the Eugene, OREGON chapter of NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

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WillametteValleyNORML.org

A Voice for Responsible Marijuana Smokers

Since its founding in 1970, NORML has provided a voice in the public policy debate for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition and favor an end to the practice of arresting marijuana smokers. A nonprofit public-interest advocacy group, NORML represents the interests of the tens of millions of Americans who smoke marijuana responsibly. During the 1970s, NORML led the successful efforts to decriminalize minor marijuana offenses in 11 states and significantly lower marijuana penalties in all others.

The oldest and largest marijuana legalization organization in the country, NORML maintains a professional staff in Washington, DC, and a network of volunteer state and local [NORML Chapters](#) across the country. Check 'em out, and find the one nearest you!

The NORML mission is to move public opinion sufficiently to achieve the repeal of marijuana prohibition so that the responsible use of cannabis by adults is no longer subject to penalty.

When marijuana is enjoyed responsibly, subjecting users to harsh criminal and civil penalties provides no public benefit and causes terrible injustices. For reasons of public safety, public health, economics and justice, the prohibition laws should be repealed to the extent that they criminalize responsible marijuana use. **NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws – is located at 1600 K Street, NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20006-2832. Phone (202) 483-5500, Fax: (202) 483-0057 or visit: www.norml.org**

Willamette Valley NORML is your local network in the fight to reform state and federal marijuana laws, whether by voter initiative or through the elected legislatures. W-V-NORML will serve as an informational resource to media on marijuana-related stories, providing a perspective to offset the [anti-marijuana propaganda](#) from the government; lobby state and federal legislators in support of reform legislation; publish a regular [newsletter](#); host an informative web site; and serve as the umbrella group for a regional network of citizen-activists committed to ending marijuana prohibition and legalizing marijuana.

Along with their parent organization, W-V-NORML will sponsor public advertising campaigns to better educate the public about marijuana and alternatives to current marijuana policy; provide legal assistance and support to victims of the current laws; and promote relevant research.

W-V-NORML supports the right of adults to use marijuana responsibly, whether for [medical](#) or [personal](#) purposes. All penalties, both civil and criminal, should be eliminated for responsible use. W-V-NORML also advocates the legalization of [hemp](#) (non-psychoactive marijuana) for industrial use. **To find out more, like how you can help, call, write or visit our website. You'll be glad you did!**

<continued from DRUG TESTS FOR CANNABIS EXPOSURE NOT ADVISABLE FOR INFANTS, STUDY SAYS, page 1 > evaluated did not test for the presence of carboxy THC when confirmatory assay measures were later performed.

Immunoassay tests rely on the use of antibodies (proteins that will react to a particular substance or a group of very similar substances) and document whether a specific reaction occurs. Therefore, a 'positive' result on an immunoassay test presumes that a certain quantity of a particular substance may be present in the sample, but it does not actually identify the presence of the substance itself. A more specific chemical test, known as chromatography, must be performed in order to confirm any preliminary analytical test results. Samples that test positive on the presumptive immunoassay test, but then later test negative on the confirmatory test are known as false positives.

In April, researchers at the University of North Carolina reported that chemicals present in various baby wash products, including Johnson's Head-to-Toe Baby Wash and CVS Baby Wash, frequently [cross-react](#) with the immunoassay test to cause 'false positive' results for carboxy THC. However, in this latest study, none of the unconfirmed immunoassay test results were due to contaminants from baby wash soaps.

Researchers concluded: "Until the compounds contributing to positive urine screen results in infants are identified, we encourage the use of alternative specimens for the detection and investigation of neonatal exposure to cannabinoids. Screen-positive cannabinoid results from infant samples should not be reported without confirmation or appropriate consultation, because they cannot currently be interpreted."

Infants may be drug tested in situations where their mothers are suspected of consuming illicit substances during pregnancy or have tested positive for illicit substances themselves. However, [critics](#) of infant drug testing argue that the hospital staff's decision regarding whether to conduct such tests is often subjective and potentially discriminatory. For example, a 2007 [study](#) published in the *Journal of Women's Health* reported that "black women and their newborns were 1.5 times more likely to be tested for illicit drugs as non-black women," after controlling for obstetrical conditions and socio-demographic factors, such as single marital status or a lack of health insurance.

Twelve states legally define prenatal exposure to any illegal drug as child abuse.

For more information on DRUG TESTS FOR CANNABIS EXPOSURE NOT ADVISABLE FOR INFANTS, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483- 5500 or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Unresolved discrepancies between cannabinoid test results for infant urine," appears in the journal *Clinical Chemistry*.

<continued from STUDY: "THERE IS NOW CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT CANNABINOIDS ARE USEFUL FOR THE TREATMENT OF VARIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS", page 1 > Investigators from the nova-Institute and the Hannover Medical School in Germany reviewed over 100 controlled trials assessing the safety and efficacy of cannabis and cannabinoids.

Researchers reported: "Knowledge about the therapeutic potential of cannabis products has been greatly improved by a large number of clinical trials in recent years. ... There is now clear evidence that cannabinoids are useful for the treatment of various medical conditions," including chronic neuropathy (nerve pain), multiple sclerosis, HIV/AIDS, Gilles de la Tourette syndrome, and other indications.

Regarding the safety profile of cannabis and cannabinoids, investigators determined: "The most common side effects of cannabinoids are tiredness and dizziness (in more than ten percent of patients), psychological effects, and dry mouth. Tolerance to these side effects nearly always



develops within a short time. Withdrawal symptoms are hardly ever a problem in the therapeutic setting."

Authors did express concern that cannabis could pose additional health risks for adolescents and/or pregnant or breast-feeding women, as well as individuals diagnosed with Hepatitis C, severe cardiovascular disease, addictive disorders, or those vulnerable to certain psychiatric disorders, such as schizophrenia.

Investigators acknowledged that cannabis dosing may adversely impact psychomotor skills. However, they noted, "Patients who take cannabinoids at a constant dosage over an extensive period of time often develop tolerance to the impairment of psychomotor performance, so that they can drive vehicles safely."

They concluded, "No acute deaths have been

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<continued from previous page> described that could be unequivocally attributed solely to cannabis consumption or treatment with cannabinoids."

The paper is the second review in recent months rebutting the present [Schedule I](#) status of cannabis under federal law, which states that the plant and its organic constituents possess a "high potential for abuse," and that they lack "accepted medical use" and "accepted safety ... under medical supervision."

Writing in *The Open Neurology Journal* this past May, investigators with the University of California at San Diego and the University of California, Davis [concluded](#): "Evidence is accumulating that cannabinoids may be useful medicine for certain indications.

Based on evidence currently available, the (federal) Schedule I classification (of cannabis) is not tenable; it is not accurate that cannabis has no medical value, or that information on safety is lacking."

In 2011, the Obama administration -- via the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) -- formally [denied](#) a nine-year-old administrative [petition](#) filed by NORML and a [coalition](#) of public interest organizations calling on the agency to initiate hearings to reassess the present classification of marijuana as a schedule I controlled substance.

In her denial of the petition, DEA administrator Michele Leonhart [alleged](#): "[T]here are no adequate and well-controlled studies proving (marijuana's) efficacy; the drug is not accepted by qualified experts. ... At this time, the known risks of marijuana use have not been shown to be outweighed by specific benefits in well-controlled clinical trials that scientifically evaluate safety and efficacy."

In June, Ms. Leonhart [testified](#) before Congress that she believed that heroin and marijuana posed similar threats to the public's health [because](#), in her opinion, "all illegal drugs are bad."

Coalition advocates are presently [appealing](#) the DEA's denial of their petition in federal court.

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "The therapeutic potential of cannabis and cannabinoids" is available in the online edition of *Deutsches Ärzteblatt International* here: <http://www.aerzteblatt.de/int/archive/article?id=127603>.*

<continued from CANNABIS, OTHER ILLICIT DRUGS, ASSOCIATED WITH "SMALL OR MODERATE INCREASES IN ACCIDENT RISK," STUDY SAYS, page 1 > An investigator from Aalborg University and the Institute of Transport Economics in Oslo assessed the risk of road accident associated with drivers' use of licit and illicit drugs, including amphetamines, analgesics, anti-asthmatics, anti-depressives, anti-histamines, benzodiazepines, cannabis, cocaine, opiates, penicillin and zopiclone (a sleeping pill). The author reviewed [data](#) from 66 separate studies evaluating the use of illicit or prescribed drugs on accident risk.

After the author adjusted for publication bias (editors' tendency not to publish studies that fail to show significant risks), the study found that cannabis was associated with minor, but not significantly increased odds of traffic injury (1.06) or fatal accident (1.25).

By comparison, opiates (1.44), benzodiazepine tranquillizers (2.30), anti-depressants (1.32), cocaine (2.96), amphetamines (4.46), and the sleeping aid zopiclone (2.60) were all associated with a greater risk of fatal accident than cannabis. Anti-histamines (1.12) and penicillin (1.12) were associated with comparable odds to cannabis.

The study concluded: "By and large, the increase in the risk of accident involvement associated with the use of drugs must be regarded as modest. ... Compared to the huge increase in accident risk associated with alcohol, as well as the high accident rate among young drivers, the increases in risk associated with the use of drugs are surprisingly small."

By contrast, separate experimental data indicates the combined ingestion of cannabis and alcohol can likely increase crash risk in a manner that is greater than that associated with the use of either substance alone.

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Risk of road accident associated with the use of drugs: A systematic review and meta-analysis of evidence from epidemiological studies," appears in the journal *Accident Analysis and Prevention*. Additional information regarding cannabis use and psychomotor behavior is available in the NORML white paper, "Cannabis and Driving: A Scientific and Rational Review," available online at: <http://norml.org/library/item/cannabis-and-driving-a-scientific-and-rational-review>.*

<continued from DEA: MARIJUANA PLANT SEIZURES DOWN 35 PERCENT NATIONWIDE, page 1 > Data for the year 2011 indicates that some [6.7 million](#) cannabis plants were eradicated nationwide under the DEA's Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program. This figure represents the lowest total of cultivated plants eradicated [since 2006](#), and is a 35 percent decrease from 2010, when the DEA reported eradicating some [10.3 million](#) marijuana plants.

The year-to-year drop was largely a result of a decline in the total number of plants eradicated in California. In 2010, the DEA reported eradicating some 7.4 million plants in California. That number fell to just under 4 million plants in 2011.

Overall, approximately 60 percent of all of the marijuana plants eradicated in the United States in 2011 were from California plots.

The DEA further reported having seized over \$11 million in assets associated with its eradication efforts in California. Nationwide, the agency reported seizing over \$42 million in assets associated with its Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program.

According to a July 2012 Government Accountability Office (GAO) [report](#), the Justice Department's asset forfeiture fund under President Barack Obama is the largest on record, having grown from \$500 million in 2003, to \$1.8 billion in 2011. According to the GAO, the fund [paid out](#) approximately \$79 million to California law enforcement agencies, the most in the nation, for their participation in federal raids and seizures.

In recent months, the Justice Department has [targeted](#) numerous properties in California for civil asset forfeiture - including [Harborside Health Center](#), the largest and most prominent medical marijuana dispensary in the state.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.

<continued from MULTIPLE POTENTIAL BEACHHEADS FOR LEGALIZATION IN POT WAR LOOM THIS NOVEMBER, page 1 > possession and state-licensed distribution of cannabis for therapeutic purposes. Montana voters will decide on [Initiative Referendum 124](#), which seeks to [repeal](#) amendments enacted by lawmakers in 2011 to [restrict](#) the state's 2004, voter approved medical cannabis law. Colorado voters will decide on [Amendment 64](#), which

would immediately allow for the possession of up to one ounce of marijuana and/or the cultivation of up to six cannabis plants by those persons age 21 and over. Longer-term, the measure seeks to establish regulations governing the commercial production and distribution of marijuana by licensed retailers. In Washington, voters will decide on [Initiative 502](#), which seeks to legalize and to regulate the production and sale of limited amounts of marijuana for adults.

An Arkansas measure that seeks to legalize the use of marijuana as medicine remains pending. On Friday, a spokesperson for the Secretary of State's office [affirmed](#) that petitioners [Arkansans for Compassionate Care](#) would have an additional 30 days to gather signatures in favor of the measure. Petitioners need to gather an additional 26,000 signatures from registered voters to qualify the measure for the November 2012 ballot.

Oregon: Cannabis Tax Act Continues Campaign For November Ballot

Salem, OR, USA: A statewide proposal that seeks to allow for the regulated sale of cannabis to those over age 21 [will appear](#) on the November electoral ballot.

If passed by voters this fall, OCTA (Measure 80) would allow for the state-licensed production and retail sale of cannabis to adults. OCTA campaign proponents estimate that retail sales of cannabis would yield approximately \$140 million annually, 90 percent of which would be directed toward the state's general fund.

The cultivation or possession of cannabis for non-commercial purposes would not be subject to state licensing or taxation.

The measure also seeks to allow for the sale of cannabis for therapeutic purposes to qualified patients "at cost" and allows for the production of [industrial hemp](#). Oregon voters in 1998 [approved legislation](#) by voter initiative legalizing the use, possession, and cultivation of cannabis for medicinal purposes.

A June 2012 [survey](#) of 686 Oregon voters

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<continued from previous page> conducted by the firm Public Policy Polling reported that Oregonians were divided on the issue. [Forty-three percent](#) of respondents said that they supported legalizing marijuana, while 46 percent of respondents opposed the idea. Men, self-identified Democrats and Independents endorsed legalization, while women and self-identified Republicans opposed it. *For more information, please visit: <http://octa2012.org/>. NORML has additional details about this and other 2012 ballot proposals at its newly redesigned 'Smoke the Vote' website here: <http://norml.org/about/smoke-the-vote>.*

Prohibitionist Talking Points: "Industry Employers See Trouble With Legalized Marijuana"

OR, USA: An employee suffers an accident on the job. Company policy requires that the employee be tested for illegal drugs. The employee tests positive for marijuana. The employee has a big problem.

However, who would have the problem if marijuana were as legal as alcohol?

It could be the employer, said lawyer **Ron Guerra**, who specializes in employment law as a partner in the Lake Oswego office of [Jordan Ramis PC](#). Legalized marijuana could create a huge problem for business in Oregon, he said.

If Measure 80 were to successfully legalize the drug, Guerra said it would be much harder for employers to pin impaired behavior on marijuana use and then respond accordingly. He added that it is unclear how far employers could go to prohibit employees' use of marijuana away from the workplace.

A lot of the possible consequences of the ballot measure are unclear, Guerra said. In particular, how would employers determine whether a worker is affected by marijuana?

"It's an open question right now as to these issues of impairment," he said.

Backers of the measure claim legalization of marijuana in Oregon would solve a lot of problems. However, critics in business and industry say it would create more problems than it would solve.

Regardless of what Oregon voters decide in November, the federal government still considers marijuana an illegal controlled substance. Federal construction contracts often require Oregon employers to guarantee drug-free workforces.

Paul Stanford, a marijuana activist and one of the

chief petitioners behind the ballot measure, said that isn't a problem. Employers could ban their workers from smoking marijuana just as they can ban them from smoking cigarettes.

If workers were to smoke marijuana only at home, he said, employers would have to focus on specific performance issues.

"When it's not prohibited, it will be about actual impairment," Stanford said.

"Impairment" is a tricky issue, said **John Killin**, president of [Associated Builders and Contractors' Pacific Northwest chapter](#).

Determining whether a worker is functionally impaired becomes more difficult when workers are free to smoke marijuana at home, he said.

"The measure creates issues across many industries dealing with whole problem of impairment and showing up to work impaired," Killin said. "It throws out a lot of policies and procedures that apply when people show up at work impaired."

Debra Dunn, president of the [Oregon Trucking Association](#), noted that truck drivers often cross state lines. Allowing drivers to smoke marijuana recreationally in Oregon puts them and their employers at risk in other states, she said. "It would put us in a position of making our jobs more difficult," Dunn said.

That might be an understatement, Guerra said.

"I would see that as a major problem for the trucking industry, especially here in Portland where truckers are going back and forth across state lines all the time," he said.

Putting that issue aside, Guerra said commercial trucking licenses often require random drug testing.

"Legalized marijuana would throw that whole process right out on its ear," he said.

Killin said the initiative is a major concern in the construction industry.

"Safety comes first, so we are looking at this from the same lens we always have," he said. "It is a matter of preventing impairment on the job through drug-free policies and procedures. This initiative creates a burden on a hard-hit industry."

Stanford said it is hard to speak to employers' concerns.

"We don't address the employment issue directly,"

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<continued from previous page> he said, but added that employers – and everyone else – would benefit from legalization of marijuana.

The traditional argument is that legalization would free up court time and jail space for more serious offenders while letting state authorities control and tax sales of the drug. Beyond that, according to Stanford, employers will actually see a healthier workforce. They just have to look beyond the myths of marijuana, he said.

"Once the science kicks in, they'll realize employees who smoke marijuana don't have the same health problems as people who smoke cigarettes," Stanford said.

Also, sophisticated screening methods can be used to determine whether people are actually impaired by marijuana use, he said. Traces of marijuana can stay in a person's body for weeks, so testing should focus on current, rather than recent, marijuana use, he added.

Stanford said he fully expects Oregon voters to legalize marijuana and a federal court challenge to follow.

"We wrote our initiative to be upheld in federal court," he said, adding that Oregon would prevail.

But marijuana supporters did not prevail in 2010, when Oregon Supreme Court justices ruled 5-2 that the state's medical marijuana law does not protect workers from being fired for using the federally illegal drug.

Measures to legalize marijuana are also on ballots in Colorado and Washington. In a dispute between a Colorado medical marijuana grower and a dispensary, Arapahoe County District Court Judge Charles Pratt ruled this month that Colorado's entire medical marijuana law is invalid because it is trumped by federal law.

In a similar case in Arizona, Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Michael McVey ruled in May that state decisions provide no protection against federal drug laws.

Stanford said he is unfazed by such precedents, especially as they relate to the marijuana initiative on the November ballot. Colorado and Washington may well see more problems than Oregon, he said.

"They don't deal with the issue of federal supremacy the way we do," he said.

SOURCE = **Story BY: [Tom Henderson, visit - http://djcoregon.com/news/2012/08/23/industry-critics-see-trouble-with-legalized-marijuana/](http://djcoregon.com/news/2012/08/23/industry-critics-see-trouble-with-legalized-marijuana/)**

POT LEGALIZATION'S TIPPING POINT; On The Cusp Of History, NORML's Founder Calls For Sanity In The I-502 Debate In Washington State

WA, USA: Washington, D.C., lawyer Keith Stroup founded NORML, one of the nation's leading organizations advocating marijuana law reform, in 1970. So he's been working this issue a long, long time. But now he's seeing something new in Washington state. And it's not good.

"Never has an issue divided our community like 502," he said during a debate at Hempfest last weekend, speaking about the initiative that would legalize and regulate marijuana in our state.

Certainly, other initiatives have also given rise to fractiousness. Take Colorado, where eight-count 'em-eight competing legalization initiatives were filed with the state last year. (One is now on the November ballot.) But Stroup says the level of animosity he's seen in this state tops Colorado, as well as Oregon, which also has a legalization initiative on the ballot.

In an interview with Seattle Weekly, Stroup partly blames the infighting on I-502 opponents, some of whom he calls "kind of crude." He says one anti-502 crusader even threatened to bring a gun to a meeting a few days ago. But Stroup also recognizes that some opponents have legitimate concerns, most notably the provision in I-502 that sets a new standard for marijuana-based DUI charges. Stroup says he also opposes that provision. In spite of that, he's come out firmly in favor of I-502-in large part because he thinks it could win.

"We're at a tipping point," he told the Hempfest crowd. "For the first time, we have won the hearts and minds of majority of the American public." He points to national surveys showing a majority support for marijuana legalization. "So what is needed . . . is for one or two or three states to stand up to the federal government and say 'To hell with you.'" Read more >>
<http://www.mapinc.org/drugnews/v12/n422/a10.html>

Michigan: Grand Rapids Voters Will Decide On Fine-Only Offense For Pot

Grand Rapids, MI, USA: Grand Rapids voters this November will [decide](#) on a municipal measure to depenalize marijuana possession offenses to a non-criminal, fine-only offense.

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News From *your* local affiliate of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

<continued from previous page> The City Commissioner's office has approved the measure, [Proposal 2](#), which seeks to allow local law enforcement the discretion to ticket first-time marijuana offenders with a civil citation, punishable by a \$25 fine and no criminal record. The city of Ann Arbor enacted a similar municipal [ordinance](#) in the early 1970s.

Proponents of the initiative [collected](#) over 10,000 signatures from registered Grand Rapids voters to place the proposal on the November ballot.

Voters in Detroit will also [decide](#) on a municipal measure this November to remove marijuana possession penalties for those age 21 or older.

Under [state law](#), possessing cannabis is a criminal misdemeanor offense, punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$2,000 fine. *For more information, please visit: www.decriminalizegr.org.*

Colorado: Passage Of Marijuana Legalization Measure Would Potentially Yield \$60 Million In New Annual Revenue And Savings, Study Says

Denver, CO, USA: The passage and enactment of a statewide marijuana ballot measure this fall could generate as much as \$60 million in annual savings and revenue, according to a budgetary [analysis](#) prepared by the Colorado Center on Law & Policy.

[Amendment 64](#), The Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol Act of 2012, allows for the possession of up to one ounce of marijuana and/or the cultivation of up to six cannabis plants by those age 21 and over. Longer-term, the measure seeks to establish regulations governing the commercial production and distribution of marijuana by licensed retail outlets.

According to the [analysis](#), enacting Amendment 64 could result in an estimated: \$12 million dollars of annual savings in criminal justice costs, \$24 million in excise tax revenue; \$8.7 million in state sales tax revenue, \$14.5 million in local tax revenue, along with the creation of several hundred new jobs.

Authors speculate that these savings and revenue projections could double by 2017. According to an August [survey](#) from the firm Public Policy Polling, Coloradoans favor the measure by a margin of 47 percent to 38 percent. Independent voters backed the measure (58 percent to 28 percent) and so did Democrats (59 percent to 22 percent). By contrast, on 26 percent of Republican voters said they favored Amendment 64. *For more information, please visit: <http://www.regulatemarijuana.org>.*

Missouri: Springfield City Council Votes On Municipal Marijuana Depenalization Measure

Springfield, MO, USA: Members of the Springfield City Council [voted](#) 6 to 3 on Monday to act on a petition-based ordinance that seeks to significantly reduce the penalties associated with the possession of marijuana. Citizen proponents of the measure - [Show-Me Cannabis Regulation](#) and [Springfield NORML](#) - collected some 2,600 signatures from municipal voters to place the proposal before the Council. If city lawmakers had not decided in favor of the proposal, then it would have gone before voters this November.

As written, the measure amends local penalties for the possession of up to 35 grams of cannabis by adults to primarily a fine-only offense. It also allows for violators to have their arrest record expunged after two years, and requires City Council to create a citizens oversight committee to monitor the ordinance's implementation and enforcement. Under [state law](#), possession of 35 grams or less is defined as a criminal misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

The local measure is modeled after a similar municipal decriminalization ordinance that was [previously approved](#) by 61 percent of Columbia, MO voters in 2004. *For more information, please visit: <http://show-mecannabis.com/>. Additional information regarding this and other 2012 statewide ballot initiatives is available at: <http://norml.org/about/smoke-the-vote>.*