

**Guest Commentary:**

# Be aware of prescription drugs' effects before driving

**By Trooper Deanna Goeman**  
South Dakota Highway Patrol

Drugged driving can be deadly. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, out of the 12,055 drivers who died in car accidents in the U.S. who were tested for drugs, one-third tested positive for drugs. What is a drug? A drug is any substance when taken into the human body impairs the person's ability to operate a motor vehicle safely. This includes alcohol, illicit drugs and prescription drugs. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration National Roadside Survey, more than 16 percent of weekend nighttime driver tested positive for illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter medications. These statistics are indications that continuing education, prevention, and law enforcement efforts are needed from public safety.

In the past two decades drunk-driving deaths plummeted from 30,000 a year to 15,000. In large part to stricter laws, organization support such as MADD, education and social stigma with an arrest. Lack of education is a large part of prescription drug abuse and DUIs.

Your ability to drive can be affected by prescription drugs or over the counter medications purchased at a pharmacy. These medications include minor tranquilizers, antihistamines, and antidepressants. Prescription medication is more likely to affect your driving abilities within the first two weeks. Many times you are not able to predict how medication will affect you until a situation arises where you have to respond quickly to avoid a crash. Dentist, doctors, and pharmacists need to tell their clients of any risks associated with any medication they provide. Driving while on prescription drugs be dangerous for yourself and the public. If the drugs cause impairment it is against the law. Here are some safety tips when mixing medication with driving.

- If you have to take medication that affects your driving, plan ahead. Ask a friend to drive, or take a taxi or public transport.
- If you are concerned about your ability to drive safely, do not stop taking your medication. Stop driving, and discuss our concerns with your doctor or pharmacist. There could be another medication you can take that will not affect your driving ability.
- Always ask your doctor or pharmacist about side effects of medications that you

have been prescribed, particularly whether they are safe to take when driving.

- Always tell your healthcare provider about any other drugs (including prescribed, over-the-counter, herbal and illicit drugs) that you are taking, as these may interact with your medications and affect your ability to drive.
- Do not use other drugs like alcohol or marijuana with your medication, they could increase the effects. Talk with your health care provider about the effects of alcohol on the medications that you are taking.
- When taking over-the-counter medications such as cold and flu preparations, it is important that you take the medication as directed; some of these may impair driving ability. Talk to your pharmacist.

The International Council on Alcohol, Drugs, and Traffic Safety provided some comparisons between impairment caused by blood alcohol levels and common medications that would cause equal impairment. These are guidelines and a request for consultation by a health care provider is recommended when using medication and driving.

Drug Class	Generic Name	Estimated BAC Equivalent
Antihistamines	<b>Chlorpheniramine</b> (an antihistamine that reduces the natural chemical histamine in the body).	.08%
	<b>Promethazine</b> (used to treat allergy symptoms, nausea and vomiting after surgery and to prevent motion sickness.)	.08%
Antidepressants	<b>Sertaline</b> (an antidepressant in a group of drugs Antidepressants called selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs).)	.05-.08%
	<b>Escitalopram</b> (an antidepressant in a group of Drugs called selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs).)	.0-.08%
	<b>Amirypitiline</b> (a tricyclic antidepressant)	.08%
Hypnotics	<b>Doxepin</b> (a tricyclic antidepressant)	.08%
	<b>Temazepam</b> (in a group of drugs called Benzodiazepines)	.08%
	<b>Nitrazepam</b> (belongs to a group of medicines called Benzodiazepines)	.08%
	<b>Diazepam</b> (in a group of drugs called Benzodiazepines)	.08%
Tranquilizers	<b>Oxazepam</b> (in a group of drugs called Benzodiazepines)	.08%
	<b>Olanzapine</b> (an antipsychotic medication that affects 0.08% chemicals in the brain.)	.08%
	<b>Haloperidol</b> (an antipsychotic medication)	.08%

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Vermillion shortchanged - again

During the 1970s, West Main from the Main Street Center to Stanford and Dakota Street from Cherry to the bypass were redone to a width of 52' with new taller "cobra" style streetlights. The consensus of the city council was that this would be the minimum standard for future improvements of major streets. The progressives eventually left the city council and we have had mostly bobble heads since.

In 2007, the city reworked Dakota Street from Main to Cherry. Remember that project? A six-month project took nine months. The end product for Vermillion's two busiest intersections (Main & Dakota and Cherry & Dakota) is that they are vastly undersized. This part of Dakota Street is too narrow and every driveway is undersized. The Dakota Realty building is oversized for the lot size and vehicles are allowed to park in the set back area, thereby reducing the visibility of the intersection. The streetlights on

this section of Dakota are so low that they are almost in your eyes. The lights do not have reflectors on top so much of the light goes up.

So, before you criticize this article, first go to Cherry and Dakota and observe the traffic, look at the tire marks on the curb, second watch the traffic using the entrance to the parking lot just north of the Science Center. Notice the tire marks on the curb and the rut in the grass next to the driveway. Third, observe the traffic on Main and Dakota. Watch a semi-truck turn onto Dakota and notice the striping.

Well, Vermillion is about to have another truck route of inadequate width. The city plans a three-lane Stanford Street from Main to Cherry, even though the building set back, established years ago would easily accommodate a wider street. Yup, it's a truck route.

It appears that no member of the City Council has any planning expertise.

**Paul M. Hesse**  
Vermillion

**By Cleo Erickson**

Excerpts from the Plain Talk

### 1971

Mr. Myron Iverson has donated his 1961 Cadillac ambulance to the city and county. Mr. Iverson discontinued his ambulance business on July 1. All requests for ambulance service should be made to the Vermillion Police Dispatcher at 624-4408.

A request was made to the City Council to exclude racing pigeons from the ordinance regulating animals within the city limits.

A total of 13 area artists participated in the 1st annual Sidewalk Art Show and Sale sponsored by the Friends of the Museum was held on the USD Campus.

At the Council's regular meeting, an ordinance that would have amended the newly farm animal ordinance was tabled. It would have excluded racing homing pigeons from regulation. The Council is split on exactly what to do with the pigeons. One Alderman stated that

## SESQUICENTENNIAL HIGHLIGHTS

pigeons are a bigger problem than horses. He went on to say "Horses don't land on anybody's roof." Another Alderman suggested that "maybe make a pigeon leash law." The fate of the pigeon in Vermillion is unknown.

At this week's Council meeting and after months of discussion about pigeons the Council amended the animal ordinance that allows pigeons within the city limits if they are owned by members of the National Pigeon Association, the pigeons must be kept in a closed loft, be banded and exercise only on the owners property. So, keep your pigeons.

Frederick Manfred, well known South Dakota author, will be the guest speaker at the Missouri River Conference on October 7th. His topic will be "The Missouri River in its Natural State."

Dedication ceremonies for the new Center of Continuing Education at USD will be held at the Center at 3:30 p.m. on October 8, 1971.

At Monday night's meeting of the City Council, Oden

Implement Company was awarded the bid for the new ambulance. The model of the new vehicle will be a 1972 International Harvester.

Vermillion and other communities will need to find solutions to their solid waste disposal problems in the near future. The public is invited to a meeting regarding solid waste disposal on Monday, November 8th at the Center for Continuing Education.

The Newberry Store was the scene of an early morning robbery. The Manager had just completed a bank deposit of \$1155.00 and placed it in the safe. He walked out of his office and when he came back the money was missing.

Employees working at the lunch counter saw a man wearing a black trench coat and black hat walk into the store. Both employees said he was sharp looking as he walked to the back of the store. Chief Offerdahl said this was possibly the man and he seemed to know where he was going without hesitation. The investigation is continuing.

Shoppers!!! Don't forget to sign up for a free turkey to be given away by participating Chamber members. The names will be collected at the close of business on Saturday and 30 names will be drawn for turkeys. There are a total of 100 turkeys to be given away. Shoppers need not be present to win and may register as often as possible.

Ground breaking ceremonies for the new \$3,050,000 Fine Arts Center will be held at 2:00 p.m., November 12, 1971. Guests include the South Dakota Legislature and the Board of Regents. The College of Fine Arts is currently housed in eight different buildings.

A "Holiday Historic House Tour," has been set for December 12th from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. This is the first Tour of Homes sponsored by the Clay County Historical Society.

**END 1971**

## PIERRE

From Page 4

An example is Rep. Nelson's HB 1143. In his bill he wants to make it so no matter what, if the victim is incapable of giving consent because of any intoxicating, narcotic, or anesthetic agent or hypnosis, "regardless of whether or not the perpetrator knew or should have known that the victim was incapable of giving consent."

The problems the defense attorneys had with this bill is that it removes any defense for someone accused of such a crime who was out dating or met someone in which later developed into a sexual event. The "victim" in this case could claim she was raped, did not give consent (or could not remember). HB 1143, removes any defense one would have to avoid a felony and prison time.

Of course nobody on the committee thinks that if someone is clearly passed-out that it is okay to take advantage of that situation. But there are too many gray areas to not allow for some defense possibilities for the accused. A simple possibility would be a young lady who gets pregnant and doesn't know what to tell her parents. She could claim she was raped or taken advantage of without her consent so her parents redirect their anger. Try defending yourself if HB 1143 passed.

Rep. Nelson makes comments on blogs about the committee members who opposed his bill, stating we are supporters of rapists. It is this tactic that he has been using to bully and pressure people that is causing a lot of problems for himself. Quite frankly, it is he who needs to learn to vote on the merits of the bill, not just a title that sounds good.

My five-year-old is coming with me this next week. He is the same one I lost for about 10-15 minutes last year when he ran all the way down to the basement of the Capitol. This time I am going to remember what he is wearing in case I do have to give a description to capitol police to locate him. Wish me luck on this venture.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me by e-mail: Rep.Boomgarden@state.sd.us or by calling and leaving a message at 773-3851.

Remember our troops!

## EDUCATION REVAMP

**By Rep. Tom Jones**

District 17

In our sixth week of legislature, the much-discussed bill dealing with total revamping of our state's education was presented on the House floor. Once again, a lot of time was spent debating the three parts of this bill.

They were: 1) A 20 percent bonus to the top teachers in each district. 2) An \$8,000 bonus for new teachers going into the math and science fields. This would be for five years to each for a total of \$40,000. 3) Elimination of continuing contracts (tenure) for teachers.

When the dust settled BH 1234

passed 41-28 and now goes to the Senate side for discussion. Since the bill was presented as amended in the House Education Committee and passed 11-4, some interesting events occurred. It appears that members of school groups didn't agree with their lobbyists' opinions in testimony. The Association of School Boards did state that they disagree with Gov. Daugaard's conclusion that our current public education system isn't working. Most administrators did not agree with testimony given in committee.

I have had several e-mails asking why legislators are messing with an issue they know very little about. Funding the base formula should be our job. We should let school boards, administrators and teachers at the local

level make the education decisions.

It will be interesting to see what the Senate does with this bill.

Concerning other bills, HB 1080 was a bill to waive license requirements to hunt raccoon, skunk, jackrabbits, fox and coyotes. This bill failed 20-49. The Game, Fish and Parks reported non-residents spent \$176,540 last year purchasing the license. I voted against the bill.

HB 1111 would give land owners more say in condemnation processes called eminent domain. This bill failed 30-39 with me voting for the bill. This bill came up the next day for reconsideration and again failed; this time 35-35.

If you have questions or an opinion on a bill, please feel free to contact me at rep.jones@state.sd.us. Please include

your name and town you live in or near.

**Annual Meeting**  
**Township of Garfield**  
will be held  
**Tuesday, March 6, 2012, 1:30 p.m.**  
at the Dalesburg Lutheran Church for the purpose of electing one supervisor, treasurer and one clerk and for any other business that comes before the board.  
*Jim Danielson, Clerk*

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