



Safe Operation of 15-Passenger Vans

Fifteen-passenger vans are more likely to be involved in single-vehicle rollover crashes than any other type of vehicle. In recent years, the mortality rate of such accidents has ranged from 52% to 81%. Because of this, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has issued safety advisories on these vehicles.

Safety Precautions

Drivers of 15-passenger vans should:

- Reduce rollover risks.
- Avoid potential dangers.
- Insist occupants wear seat belts.

- Keep your passenger load light:** Research has shown that 15-passenger vans have a rollover risk that increases dramatically as the number of occupants increases from fewer than five to more than 10. In fact, 15-passenger vans with 10 or more occupants have a rollover rate in single-vehicle crashes that is nearly three times the rate of those that were lightly loaded.
- Check your van's tire pressure at least once a week:** One study found that 74% of all 15-passenger vans had improperly inflated tires. By contrast, 39% of passenger vehicles had improperly inflated tires. Improperly inflated tires can change handling characteristics, thereby increasing the prospect of a rollover crash in 15-passenger vans.
- Require all occupants to use their seat belts or the appropriate child restraints:** Nearly 80% of those who died nationwide in 15-passenger vans were not buckled up. Wearing seat belts dramatically increases the chances of survival during a rollover crash.
- Seat passengers and place cargo in front of the rear axle and avoid placing any loads on the roof:** By following these guidelines, you'll lower the vehicle's center of gravity and lessen the chance of a rollover crash.
- Be mindful of speed and road conditions:** Analysis of 15-passenger van crashes shows that the risk of rollover increases significantly at speeds over 50 miles per hour and on curvy roads.
- Only trained, qualified and authorized drivers should operate the vehicle:** Special training and experience are required to properly operate a 15-passenger van. Make sure your driver is appropriately trained and that they only operate these vehicles when well rested and fully alert.

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