

SAFE DRIVING

Matters

**MONTLICK &
ASSOCIATES**
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Information and Tips to Protect You and Your Family

Important Tips to Prevent Car Rollovers



Minimize Risk & Avoid Injuries by Taking Proper Safety Precautions

Rollovers are dangerous incidents that have a higher fatality rate than other types of crashes, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). While vehicle type does play a role, driver behavior and road and environmental conditions are also factors. Drivers can greatly reduce the risk of rollover accidents by following these important NHTSA safety tips.

Types of Rollovers & Their Causes

NHTSA data shows that 95% of single-vehicle rollovers are “tripped”. This happens when a vehicle leaves the roadway and slides sideways, digging its tires into soft soil/shoulder or striking an object such as a curb, irregular pavement, snow bank, or other object. Tripping can also occur when a vehicle is traveling forward, typically at a high speed. If one side of a vehicle rides up on an object, like a guardrail, it may be forced to rollover.

The data from the NHTSA suggests that driver behavior plays a significant role in most rollover crashes. Many of these occur when drivers overcorrect their steering as a panic reaction to an emergency—or even to a wheel going off the pavement’s edge. At high speeds, overcorrecting or excessive steering can cause the driver to lose control, which can force the vehicle to slide sideways and roll over. The NHTSA recommends that should your vehicle leave the roadway, reduce your speed gradually. Then when it is safe to do so, ease your vehicle back onto the roadway.

Did You Know??

Electronic Stability Control (ESC) is a promising new technology that will help drivers stay on the road in emergency situations.

Other Precautions to Minimize Risk of Rollover

There are several other precautions drivers can take that will greatly reduce the chance of a rollover accident.

- **Vehicle Type.** All types of vehicles can rollover. However, taller, narrower vehicles, such as SUV’s, pickups and vans have higher centers of gravity, and thus are more susceptible to rollover if involved in a single-vehicle crash. To learn more about car rollover ratings, go to www.safercar.gov and click on *Crash Test & Rollover Ratings*.
- **Vehicle Speed.** 40% of fatal rollover crashes involve excessive speeding, and nearly 75% of these fatalities take place where the posted speed limit is 55mph or higher. So be sure

to follow speed limits at all times, particularly on highways.

- **Location.** Rollovers are more likely to occur on rural roads and highways—particularly undivided, two-way roads or divided roads with no barriers. Nearly 75% of all rollover crashes occur in rural areas, so practice caution while driving on rural roads.
- **Tire Maintenance.** It is important to maintain your tires properly and replace them when necessary. Under-inflated and/or worn tires can be especially dangerous because they inhibit your ability to maintain vehicle control, the most important factor in reducing the chance of a rollover.
- **Proper Load.** Any load placed on the roof will be above the vehicle’s center of gravity, and will increase the vehicle’s likelihood of rolling over. Consult your vehicle’s owner manual to determine the maximum safe load for your vehicle, as well as proper load distribution. If you are using a roof rack, pay special attention to the manufacturer’s instructions and weight limits.
- **Avoid Driver Distractions.** 90% of the vehicles in fatal, single-vehicle rollover crashes were involved in routine driving maneuvers (such as going straight or negotiating a curve) at the time of the crash. This suggests that driver distractions and inattentiveness plays a significant role in rollover crashes.
- **Avoid Alcohol.** According to the NHTSA, nearly half of all fatal rollover crashes involve alcohol. Remember that impairment can result from any blood alcohol concentration (BAC) above .00, and even a small amount of alcohol can negatively affect your judgment, coordination and vision, making you more likely to lose control of your vehicle.

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

These are just a few things you can do to prevent rollover accidents. Please visit Montlick.com or HelpKeepKidsSafe.org and click on “*Family Safety & Legal Tips*” to see our latest safety videos and printed materials, and to register for Free Safety Alerts.

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