



Vans And Passenger Transportation

In a continuing effort to help our auto policyholders avoid injuries and injury claims from vehicle crashes, Loss Control brings you a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) warning for drivers and passengers of 15-passenger vans.

Fifteen-passenger vans are used for transporting college and high school sports teams, van pools, hotel transportation, church outings, and other similar purposes.

NHTSA warns that vans carrying 16 passengers (including driver) are subject to a rollover rate six times greater than regular passenger cars and vans carrying five or fewer occupants. Vans carrying 10 to 15 occupants have a rollover rate three times greater. When carrying five or less occupants, 15-passenger vans have a rollover risk similar to regular passenger cars.

NHTSA's analysis reveals that loading a 15 passenger van to capacity causes the center of gravity to shift nearly 18 inches towards the rear of the vehicle and 4 inches higher. Because a fully-loaded van has over 65

percent of its weight on the rear axles, rollover resistance is reduced and the potential for losing control during sudden maneuvers increases. This causes safety problems for drivers who normally only drive smaller passenger cars and are, therefore, unfamiliar with a loaded van's responsiveness and limits.

Because of these risks, it is important that only experienced drivers operate fully loaded vans. Drivers should understand and be familiar with the handling characteristics of vans, especially when fully loaded.

NHTSA's analysis reinforces the value of seat belts. Last year, 80 percent of all people killed in single-vehicle rollovers were not wearing seat belts. Wearing seat belts dramatically increases the chances of survival during a rollover accident.

For more information about American Family's Loss Control Services, visit www.amfam.com

DISCLAIMER

The recommendations printed here follow generally accepted safety standards. Compliance with these recommendations does not guarantee that you will be in conformance with any building code, or federal, state or local regulations regarding safety or fire. Compliance does not ensure the absolute safety of your operations or place of business.