

RISK MANAGEMENT BULLETIN

ALERT: ROLLOVER WARNING - 15 PASSENGER VANS

NHTSA Repeats Rollover Warning
To Users of 15-Passenger Vans

On April 15, 2002 the nation's top motor vehicle safety executive, Jeffrey Runge, M.D., head of the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reissued a cautionary warning to users of 15-passenger vans because of an increased rollover risk under certain conditions. A similar warning was issued in 2001.

NHTSA 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 ten. 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 are lightly loaded.

NHTSA has prepared a flyer that is available on the web at
<http://www.safercar.gov/Vehicle+Shoppers/Passenger+Van+Safety>

Risk Management recommends the following action on your part:

- ❑ **Copy and send this bulletin to all drivers in your agency who may drive these vans.**
- ❑ **Allow only trained and experienced drivers to operate the 15-passenger vans used by your agency.**
- ❑ **Insist that all occupants wear seat belts at all times. Eighty percent of those who died in 15-passenger van rollovers nationwide in the year 2000 were not buckled up. In fatal single vehicle rollovers involving these vans over the past decade, 92 percent of belted occupants survived. Besides that, it is a State Work Rule and a state law.**
- ❑ **Encourage drivers of 15-passenger vans to attend the certified defensive driving course Maine Driving Dynamics offered by Risk Management Division at no cost to your agency.**

Call our office if you have any questions at all, or if we can be of assistance.

*Risk Management Division
85 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0085
Tel: 1-800-525-1252 or 287-3351 Fax: 287-4008*

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