

15-Passenger Van Safety

Why should we be careful? 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.

If using 15-passenger vans to transport passengers, be informed on how to:

- Reduce rollover risks.
- Avoid potential dangers.
- Better protect occupants in the event of a rollover crash.



Here are some 15-passenger van safety precautions:

- **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 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 were lightly loaded.

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15-passenger van safety precautions (continued):

- **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.
- **If at all possible, 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 lower the chance of a rollover crash.
- **Be mindful of speed and road conditions:** Analysis of 15-passenger van crashes also shows that the risk of rollover increases significantly at speeds over 50 miles per hour and on curvy roads.
- **Only qualified drivers shall be permitted to operate the vehicle:** Special training and experience is required to properly operate a 15-passenger van. Make sure your driver is properly trained and that he/she only operates these vehicles when well rested and fully alert.



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