

Fatal Rollovers in 15-Passenger Vans, 1982–2008

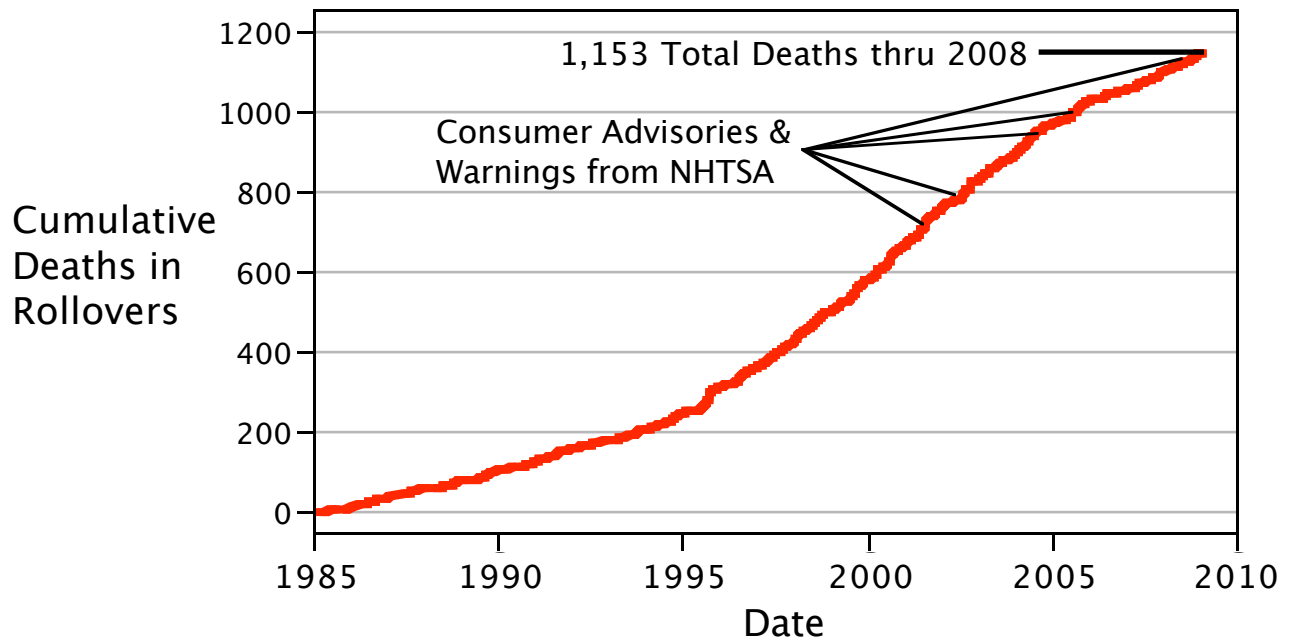


From 1982 through 2008, there have been 724 fatal rollovers of 15-passenger vans in which an occupant of the van was killed in the United States. These crashes killed 1,153 persons and incapacitatingly injured an additional 1,957. More than six thousand persons have been involved in fatal rollovers as drivers or passengers in the vans, of whom only 305 were known to be uninjured in these crashes. Because the victims were relatively young, 38,992 premature years of life (before age 70) have been lost in rollovers of 15-passenger vans since 1982. Fatal, 15-passenger van rollovers have also occurred in Mexico and Canada.

Approximately 15% of fatal rollovers of 15-passenger vans reportedly involved a tire failure.

These statistics are computed from the 1982-2008 Fatality Analysis Reporting System database maintained by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The fatal, rollover crashes involved model year 1981-2008 vans manufactured by Ford, Dodge / DaimlerChrysler, and General Motors / Chevrolet.

Cumulative Deaths in Rollovers of 15-Passenger Vans



NHTSA issued its first Consumer Advisory related to 15-passenger van rollovers on April 9, 2001. The agency repeated its warnings to the public on April 15, 2002, June 1, 2004, May 26, 2005, May 12, 2008, and May 20, 2009. Despite these many advisories, the vans have continued to roll over in fatal crashes.

Although official press releases in 2008 and 2009 from NHTSA asserted that "Overall statistics show the number of deaths in 15-passenger van rollover crashes has been declining steadily since 2001," the decline has not been consistent. Annual fatalities in 2007 and 2008 were about half of the totals in the peak years of 2000 and 2001. However, the number of persons killed actually increased in 2004, 2007, and 2008 compared with the previous years. 39% of all of the 15-passenger van rollover fatalities since 1982 (454 of 1,153) occurred after the first Consumer Advisory was issued by NHTSA in 2001.

The vehicles in our study principally included the Chevrolet Truck Express Van 3500 Extended, Chevrolet Truck Sportvan 1 Ton Extended, Dodge Truck B350/B3500 Van (Bus), Ford Truck E350 Econoline Super Club Wagon, GMC Truck Rally Van 1 Ton Extended, and GMC Truck Savana Van 3500 Extended. These vehicles were identified in a manner consistent with previous studies by NHTSA. Production of the Dodge 15-passenger van ceased with the 2002 model year.

Randy & Alice Whitfield
Quality Control Systems Corp.
<http://quality-control.us>
410-923-2411

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