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Transmitted via Email

September 09, 2004

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 120-4-17

SUBJECT: ADS – VEHICLE SAFETY

Purpose. To provide a safety alert concerning use of 15-passenger vans.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2005

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a warning to users of 15-passenger vans because of an increased rollover risk under certain conditions.

NHTSA research reinforces the fact that 15-passenger vans have a rollover risk that increases dramatically as the number of occupants increases to full capacity. The likelihood of a rollover when a van is fully loaded is about five times greater than when the vehicle contains only a driver. Analysis also showed that the risk of rollover increased significantly at speeds over 50 miles per hour and on curved roads.

Among the safety recommendations are the following:

- It is important that 15-passenger vans be operated by trained, experienced drivers.
- Insist that all occupants wear safety belts at all times.
- If possible, have passengers and cargo forward of the rear axle and avoid placing any loads on the roof.
- Check your tires: Excessively worn or improperly inflated tires can lead to a loss-of-control situation and a rollover. At least once a month, check that the vans tires are properly inflated and the tread is not worn down.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Laurie Otte, Safety and Health Officer.

WILLIAM HUNT  
State Conservationist

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