

NHTSA 2015: ADVANCING SAFETY ON AMERICA'S ROADS

In 2015, NHTSA built on decades of road safety progress by improving in three specific areas: bolstering innovation across the agency and specifically in vehicle safety technology; reforming the identification and recall of vehicles and equipment with safety-related defects; and strengthening core safety programs that help Americans make safer choices on the road.

In this brief report, we present some of the significant improvements the agency made in 2015 in these areas and in how we communicate with the public.



INNOVATING TO MAKE VEHICLES SAFER

- Advanced Automated Vehicle and Crash Avoidance Technologies:** Announced a series of steps to speed lifesaving innovations, such as vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) crash avoidance technology and to identify possible regulatory obstacles to better understand where problems can be addressed internally and where we will need Congressional action [5/13/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_will_accelerate_v2v_efforts].
- Protecting Motorcyclists From Unsafe Helmets:** Proposed a new rule to protect motorcyclists from unsafe “novelty” helmets that do not meet Federal Safety Standards for crash protection [5/20/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_action_on_unsafe_motorcycle_helmets].
- Improved the Safety of Heavy Trucks and Buses by Requiring Electronic Stability Control (ESC):** Finalized requirement for Electronic Stability Control on heavy trucks and large buses, which will save up to 49 lives and prevent up to 1,759 crashes each year [6/3/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/heavy_duty_vehicle_esc_rule_06032015].
- Increased Fuel Efficiency for Heavy Trucks:** Proposed standards for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles that are expected to lower CO2 emissions by approximately 1 billion metric tons, cut fuel costs by about \$170 billion, and reduce oil consumption by up to 1.8 billion barrels over the lifetime of the vehicles sold under the program [6/19/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/hd_trucks_phase_2_standards].
- Worked Together to Make Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB) Standard:** Announced commitment from 10 major vehicle manufacturers to make automatic emergency braking (AEB) a standard feature on all new vehicles built; agency will also add automatic emergency braking systems to its New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) 5-Star Safety Ratings [9/11/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_iihs_commitment_on_aeb_09112015].
- Offered Better Protection Against Underride Crashes:** Proposed upgrading the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards that address underride protection in light-vehicle crashes into the rear of trailers and semitrailers, such as requiring more robust rear-impact guards on trailers and semitrailers. The agency also issued a similar proposal related to single unit trucks [12/7/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_notice_underride_protection_12072015].
- Updated 5-Star Safety Ratings to Better Inform Consumers:** Proposed innovative changes to the agency’s well known 5-Star Safety Ratings program by adding an additional crash test, using new and more human-like crash test dummies, rating crash-avoidance advanced technologies, and assessing pedestrian protection [12/8/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/2015/nhtsa_proposes_new_5_star_safety_ratings_12082015].



Connected, automated vehicles that can sense the environment around them and communicate with other vehicles and with infrastructure have the potential to revolutionize road safety and save thousands of lives.

–DOT Secretary
Anthony Foxx



IMPROVING EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND RECALL VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

- Held Honda Accountable to Safeguard Public:** Found that the automaker failed to submit early warning reports that help NHTSA investigate whether safety defects or defect trends exist and warrant further action, including possible recalls. The automaker agreed to a \$70 million fine and to ensure that all required reporting is completed [1/8/15 – To read more, see [www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/DOT-fines-Honda-\\$70-million](http://www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/DOT-fines-Honda-$70-million)].
- Investigated Graco to Guard Against Defective Car Seats:** Investigated Graco, found a failure to provide a timely notification of a defect in more than 4 million car seats. The company agreed to improve car seat registration and defect identification, and pay a fine of as much as \$10 million [3/20/15 – To read more, see [www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/Car_seat_maker_Graco_fined_\\$10_million](http://www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/Car_seat_maker_Graco_fined_$10_million)].
- Collaborated to Improve Recall Completion Rates:** Hosted “Retooling Recalls” event, a one-day workshop that brought together leading transportation officials, automotive industry representatives, safety advocates, and researchers to examine how to increase unacceptably low recall completion rates [4/28/15 - To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_retooling_recalls_workshop_04282015].
- Charted a Path Forward Following GM:** Released the results of a due-diligence review in the wake of the GM ignition switch investigation, and the agency formed the Safety Systems Team of outside experts to advise on the implementation of the changes outlined in the report. In addition, through NHTSA’s continued oversight of the 2014 consent order, GM has improved its ability to identify problems earlier and improve its recall completion rates [6/5/15 – www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_forming_new_safety_teams].
- Forced Detailed Recall Performance Reporting From Fiat Chrysler:** Held a public hearing to determine whether automaker Fiat Chrysler had failed to remedy safety defects and issue required notices in 23 recalls. FCA acknowledged its failure to repair defective vehicles, agreed to rigorous Federal oversight, and agreed to buy back some defective vehicles and pay a \$105 million civil penalty, the largest NHTSA had ever imposed [5/18/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_fiat_chrysler_hearing_and_special_order_05182015].
- Accelerated the Takata Recall to Protect Against Defective Air Bags:** Accelerated recall repairs to millions of affected vehicles, prioritized recalls so the greatest safety risks were addressed first, and set deadlines for future recalls of other Takata inflators that use a suspect propellant, unless they are proved to be safe. The agency also imposed a record civil penalty of \$200 million on Takata and required the company to phase out the manufacture and sale of affected inflators [11/3/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/2015/nhtsa_imposes_record_fine-on_takata_11032015].
- Gained New Tools to Combat Safety Defects:** Secured passage of new provisions in the new five-year transportation law including: an increase in the maximum civil penalties for violations of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards from \$35 million to \$105 million; new funding to help identify and recall unsafe vehicles; and a prohibition against companies renting-out unrepared vehicles that are under safety recalls [12/4/15 – To read more, see www.transportation.gov/fastact].
- Offered New Authoritative Vehicle Reference Data:** Launched the Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC) that combines multiple vehicle data sources into one centralized source allowing for clear vehicle identification across NHTSA databases for recall or other analysis. The vPIC allows anyone to research vehicle information or decode Vehicle Identification Numbers (VIN) and lets manufacturers easily submit vehicle data to NHTSA [To read more, see <http://vpic.nhtsa.dot.gov/about.html>].
- Innovated to Better Detect Defects:** Implemented the Corporate Information Factory (CIF), a suite of state-of-the art business analytics and other related tools, to help review consumer complaints and related data faster, enhancing the agency’s ability to identify safety-defect trends.

Our obligation to save lives and prevent injuries must include sober self-examination, and when we find weaknesses, we have to fix them...NHTSA is already improving its systems for identifying and addressing vehicle safety defects, and offers options for building the workforce it needs to meet its obligations to the traveling public.

-NHTSA Administrator
Mark R. Rosekind, Ph.D.

Search for Recalls by VIN





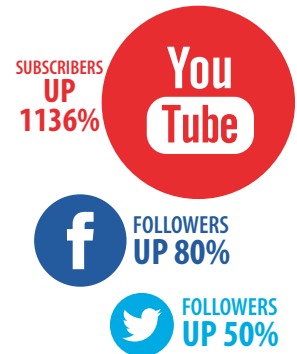
STRENGTHENING CORE SAFETY PROGRAMS

- **Expedited Grants to the States:** Streamlined the grant approval process and awarded approximately \$576 million dollars in Highway Traffic Safety Grants to improve core safety programs in the States.
- **Improved Child Restraints to Protect Kids:** Proposed new standards to improve the ease-of-use and accessibility of child restraint anchoring systems [1/23/15 – To read more, see www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/01/23/2015-00162/federal-motor-vehicle-safety-standards-child-restraint-systems-child-restraint-anchorage-systems].

America made drunk driving a national issue, and while there is no victory as long as a single American dies in an alcohol-related crash, a one-third reduction in driver alcohol use over just seven years shows how a focused effort and cooperation among the Federal government, States and communities, law enforcement, safety advocates and industry can make an enormous difference.

-NHTSA Administrator Mark R. Rosekind, Ph.D.

- **Broadened Impaired Driving Research:** Offered two new studies aimed at supporting efforts to combat drunk and drugged driving. These studies found a one-third drop since 2007 in the number of drivers with alcohol in their systems, and assessed the risk of marijuana use to driver safety [2/6/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_releases_2_impaired_driving_studies_02_2015].
- **Launched First-Ever National Tween Seat Belt Advertising Campaign:** The agency announced its first-ever national advertising campaign aimed at parents of children ages 8-14 to make sure their kids are consistently and properly wearing their seat belts every time the car is moving [3/12/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_launches_tween_seat_belt_campaign].
- **Took School Bus Safety to a New Level:** Convened the School Bus Occupant Protection meeting to assess the current state of school bus occupant safety. In response to the meeting, NHTSA announced on November 8, 2015, that it would pursue ways to make seat belts standard equipment on school buses [7/23/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/nhtsa/symposiums/july2015/index.html].
- **Put a Focus on Drowsy Driving:** Brought together stakeholders to better understand and address the issue of drowsy driving, as well as to launch a national drowsy driving initiative [11/4/15 – To read more, see www.nhtsa.gov/nhtsa/symposiums/november2015/index.html].
- **Expanded Online Outreach and Communications:** Supported NHTSA's consumer education efforts by greatly expanding social media reach, increasing Facebook followers from 11,774 to 21,299; YouTube subscribers from 963 to 11,902 with over 32.5 million views; and Twitter followers by 50 percent to 35,400.



Today, Americans are safer on our roads than ever before. Thanks to decades of effort, our vehicles better protect us in crashes and increasingly help us avoid crashes. We've seen dramatic reductions in drunk driving, increases in seat belt use, and are better addressing the safety of cyclists and pedestrians. We're holding companies accountable when they don't live up to their obligations to report safety defects, and our agency accountable for rooting out unsafe vehicles. We made significant progress in 2015. In 2016, we will double our efforts to keep Americans safe on the road, whether they drive, ride or walk.

-NHTSA Administrator Mark R. Rosekind, Ph.D.

For more information on what NHTSA is doing to help us all drive, ride, and walk safely, please visit www.nhtsa.gov.



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590
888-327-4236
800-424-9153 (TTY)

