

Ralph's Accident Reconstruction Newsletter

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child is in the middle of the back seat in an approved and properly used child safety seat or approved and properly used booster seat, as appropriate.

Improved roof strength is credited with saving 3,466 lives. Changes in the design of passenger-compartment roofs and the pillars which support them have reduced the likelihood of injury from a collapsing roof during a rollover.

You have probably noticed the highly reflective red-and-white tape striping on large trucks and semi-trailers. The cost of these tape stripes is minimal, and the NHTSA credits those strips of tape with saving 1,105 lives.

The tallies did not include technologies which help drivers avoid collisions or reduce their severity, such as anti-lock brakes and stability-control systems. There are emerging technologies which can help a driver see objects beyond his normal range of headlamp illumination, help a driver perceive a hazard through fog which would otherwise obscure his vision, disengage a cruise control and even lightly apply service brakes when closing quickly on an object ahead, and possibly others in the minds of creative engineers. A statistical comparison of vehicles with stability-control systems versus the same vehicles without those systems has shown a reduction in accident frequency near twenty percent for those vehicles equipped with stability control. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has estimated that stability-control systems could save 7,000 lives a year. Anti-lock brakes, which technology has required some adjustment to the braking habits of certain drivers, help in two ways: the current technology allows for a minimal stopping distance due to being able to hold the brakes at a state of impending lock-up (i. e., static friction) rather than locking and sliding the tires (at the rate of sliding friction, which is lower than the value of static friction), and the prevention of locked and sliding front tires also provides the driver an opportunity to steer during hard braking.

But collisions continue to occur. Please contact me for collision reconstruction, event data recorder downloads, vehicle component failure evaluations, or the other vehicle-related services I offer.

Ralph Cunningham, Inc.
Accident Reconstruction
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Collision Analysis

On-road, Off-road, Marine

Pedestrian/Bicyclist

Motorcycle Collisions

Conspicuity Evaluations

Lamp Filament Evaluations

Crash Data Retrieval

Tire Failure Evaluations

Brake/Steering Evaluations

Seat Belts/Airbags



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