



## Government Proposes Tougher Side Air Bag Requirements

Written On December 7, 2009 By [Bob Kraft](#)

The [Associated Press](#) recently reported that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has proposed more stringent requirements for vehicle side air bags. New cars and trucks would be required to have larger and stronger side air bags to prevent motorists from being tossed out of vehicles during rollover crashes. Here are excerpts from the article:

The plan is the latest attempt by the government to address deadly rollover crashes. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said the proposal, combined with anti-rollover technology, would attempt to reduce the more than 10,000 deaths in rollover crashes every year.

Car makers would need to meet performance standards in rollover crashes that would likely lead to "side curtain air bags made larger to cover more of the window opening, (and) made more robust to remain inflated longer," the government said in the proposal. The side air bags would also be manufactured "sufficiently strong to keep an occupant from being fully or partially ejected through a side window."

The Bush administration approved rules making anti-rollover technology called Electronic Stability Control, or ESC, required on all new vehicles by the 2012 model year. NHTSA said when all vehicles under 10,000 pounds or less have the technology, the number of deaths from rollover crashes should be cut in half.

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The government estimates that the new proposed requirements for side air bags will save an estimated 402 lives annually. The plan requires the auto industry to phase-in the new air bags beginning with the 2014 model year. All vehicles would need the air bags by the 2017 model year.

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