

Driverless Cars For Consumers Are A Fast Approaching Reality, But Who Is Liable When Accidents Happen?

Google had lead the push to develop driverless cars and has made great strides in making them a reality on our streets. As driverless cars are already on the roads of many cities across Florida it has become clear the technology may be out pacing society's ability to answer questions of liability and security.

Key to the rapid development of this technology has been the promise of safer roads. The vast majority of accidents are the result of human error and driverless cars have the potential to remove the danger of poor judgement by human drivers from the roads. But as an experienced [auto accident and personal injury lawyer](#) I have seen that human error is not always the cause of an accident.

Many times a malfunction or breakdown, design flaw, defective part, or severe weather has been the cause of terrible crashes. Add to those difficult to avoid problems the very real possibility that a hacker could take control of a driverless car for any number of purposes and many questions are raised about how this new technology should be introduced to society.

How will states handle questions of insurance? Who is responsible if a car gets hacked and goes on a rampage? If an accident occurs and results in injuries or deaths who will be liable? The car manufacturer, the software company, the driver, the GPS provider, a parts manufacturer or the other driver?

It won't be long until self-driving cars are on the road. Human error will be taken out of the equation, but what about mechanical or electrical malfunction? When your computer has a glitch, you simply reboot. If it crashes, you get another one. No one gets hurt or killed. But if the self-driving car malfunctions, the consequences may be catastrophic.

It seems both inevitable and scary. Computers don't drink or text and drive, but their circuitry isn't full proof. Let's hope that the future and the cars, proceed with caution.

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