

NHTSA Study Finds Three Utility Vehicles Most Dangerous

Jeep CJ-5, CJ-7, and the Toyota Land Cruiser are involved in single-vehicle fatal rollover crashes more often than other leading utility vehicles, an analysis by a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) researcher indicates.

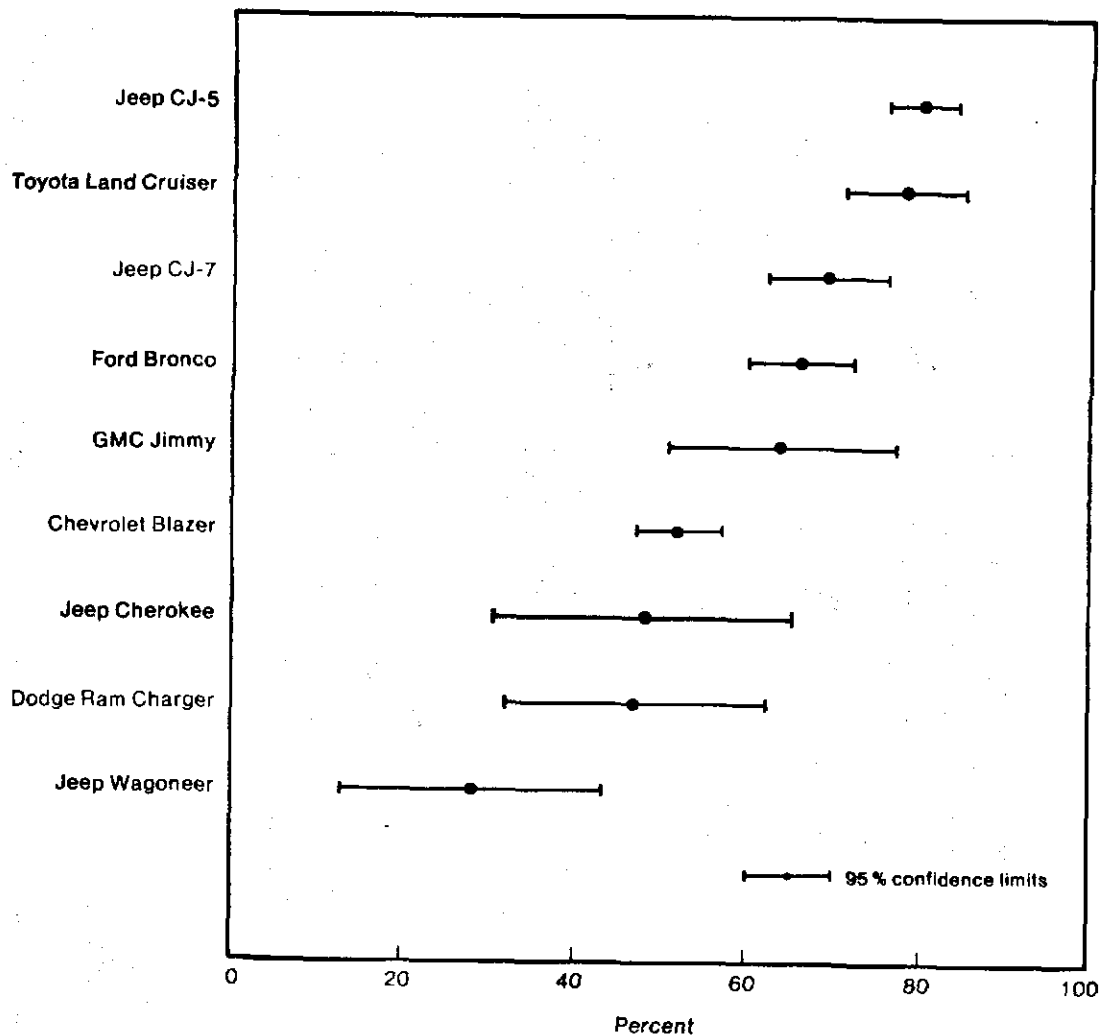
The study has just been released, nearly a year after its preparation by a researcher in NHTSA's National Center for Statistics and Analysis. The study of the single-vehicle fatal crashes involving utility vehi-

cles in 1978-80 reports that there is considerable difference in the rollover experience of various utility vehicles, with the CJ-5, CJ-7, and Toyota Land Cruiser having the worst experience.

NHTSA did not specifically refer to this analysis last month when it proposed rulemaking to require warning stickers for all utility vehicles. (See article on page 1.) Nor did it cite a University of North Carolina study which reported that the CJ-5 was much more hazardous than the Chevrolet Blazer and pre-1978 Ford Bronco. In announcing the rulemaking, the agency cited a study from the Highway Safety Research Institute of the University of Michigan that found that utility vehicles roll over at a rate at least five times higher than that for passenger cars. (See *Status Report*, Vol. 15, No. 7, May 6, 1980.) *(Cont'd on page 6)*

FIGURE 1

Percent of Single Vehicle Fatal Crashes Involving Rollover



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The Jeep CJ-5 and Toyota Land Cruiser were found to be involved in the highest percentage of fatal crashes involving rollovers of any of the utility vehicles — 80 percent and 78 percent, respectively (Figure 1).

When the numbers of fatal rollover crashes are compared with the years of registration for each utility vehicle type, the records of the CJ-5, Land Cruiser, and CJ-7 were not significantly different (Figure 2). However, the study found significant differences between both the CJ-5 and Land Cruiser and all other vehicle types.

The study reports that 85-86 percent of the fatalities resulting from crashes of CJ-5 or Land Cruisers involve a rollover.

When rollover fatalities were expressed in terms of vehicle-years of registration for each vehicle type, the CJ-5, Land Cruiser, and CJ-7 were found to have a significantly worse experience than all other utility vehicles.

“Given a fatal accident involving a utility vehicle, the Jeep CJ-5 and Toyota Land Cruiser are more likely to have rolled over than any other vehicle type,” the study concludes. “Occupant fatalities resulting from utility vehicle fatal accidents which involve a rollover occur more frequently” in Jeep CJ-5, CJ-7, and the Toyota Land Cruiser “as opposed to the other vehicle types.”

FIGURE 2

Fatal Single Vehicle Rollover Crashes per 100,000 Registered Vehicle Years

