

# Vans more likely to roll over

**■ New data reveals that passenger vans carrying more than 10 people may pose a greater threat to occupants**

**By Hank Hager**  
Oregon Daily Emerald

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has cautioned universities and organizations across the country about the possibility of fatal injuries in roll-over accidents involving passenger vans. According to the report, loading 10 or more people into 15-passenger vans heightens the possibility of the vehicle rolling over during a crash.

The report also said vans with fewer than five passengers stand a 12.3 percent chance of rolling over during a crash. Vans with 10 to 15 passengers have a 29.1 percent chance of tipping over, and those with more than 15 passengers rolled over in 70 percent of the crashes. Data was taken from wrecks recorded in Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Utah from 1994 to 1997.

Dan Geiger, coordinator of the Outdoor Program, said he questions the report's findings, because the figures released do not specify the characteristics of the study. He also questioned the final figure, saying

there should never be more than 15 passengers placed in a van specifically made to fit 15.

It should be "based on what you can safely put in the van," he said.

He said the Outdoor Program currently uses vans that weigh one ton, which he said decreases the possibility of the van rolling over.

Greg Goracke, associate athletic director at Oregon State University, said the school has attempted to phase out using vans for its athletic teams as much as possible.

"We want to take the element of risk out of our athletes' hands," he said.

He said the Athletic Department encourages its teams to use buses whenever possible. There are times though, when teams have to use vans to get to events.

Sandra Vaughn, recreation coordinator for the EMU, said she appreciates the information the NHTSA has provided and will use it when scheduling trips. But, she said, most trips taken by Club Sports teams do not have a full load.

"It's difficult to take a full load in these vans," she said, adding the amount of equipment and personal luggage makes it tough for teams to use less than two vans.

There have been reported incidents of accidents at the University

involving passenger vans, one as recently as last week.

Vaughn said members of the Club Sports baseball team were involved in a minor "fender-bender" while traveling on Interstate 5 last week, though no damage was done to the team's vehicle. No players suffered injuries.

Gregg Lobisser, director of student activities in the EMU, said he remembers an incident approximately 10 years ago involving University students and a passenger van. Although he could not recall specific facts from the incident, he said the driver, a University student, became drowsy. The student then overcompensated to avoid a crash and caused an accident, but fortunately there were no serious injuries.

Lobisser said the University needs to acknowledge the report.

"It's certainly something we should be aware of as a University and EMU and ASUO programs," he said. "It's good to be mindful of it."

Lobisser said the University is doing a good job of educating potential drivers on the safety of the road.

"You could say we're a little bit ahead of the curve in the education we do," he said, but added that "we need to incorporate some of [the NHTSA's] information into our thinking."

## Calendar

### Thursday, May 3

**EMU Craft Center Lonely Pot Sale** offers ceramics and other pottery. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Craft Center, Erb Memorial Union. For information, call 346-4361.

**Campus Planning Committee Meeting.** Agenda includes updates on the Gilbert Hall project, 955 E. 13th Ave. project and the LTD Bus Shuttle. 2-3:30 p.m. Room 228, Chiles Business Center. For information, call 346-5572.

**Humanities Lecture:** Musicologist Kofi Agawu of Princeton discusses "Ethical Issues in the Representation of African Music" in a continuation of the "Engaging African Modernities" symposium from March. 4 p.m. Alumni Lounge, Gerlinger Hall. Free. For information, call 346-3934. Reception follows.

**Comparative Literature Lecture:** Franco Moretti, Stanford University, discusses "On Bourgeois Seriousness." 4:30 p.m. Browsing Room, Knight Library. Free. For information, call 346-3986.

**Visiting Artist Lecture:** Printmaker and University alumnus Christy Wyckoff, Pacific Northwest College of Art, discusses his work-prints and paintings, 1980-2000. 6 p.m. Room 115,

Lawrence Hall. Free. For information, call 346-3610.

**Koehn Colloquium Lecture:** Homi K. Bhabha of the University of Chicago, a respected cultural critic and leading voice in postcolonial studies, discusses "Space Agency: Ethics and the Enunciation of Equality." 7 p.m. Room 177, Lawrence Hall. Free. For information, call 346-3631.

**Freeman Foundation Panel:** "China and the World Economy: The Challenges of Sustainable Development" includes presentations by Changjin Sun, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Jinlin Yang, Ministry of Finance; and Tom HuTao, State Environmental Protection Administration, Beijing. 7:30 p.m. Room 128, Chiles Business Center. Free. For information, call 346-1521.

**Author Event:** University alumnus Joseph Sutton reads from and signs copies of his loosely autobiographical book, "Morning Pages: The Almost True Story of My Life," the tale of how a chance encounter leads the main character/narrator Ben Halaby to begin each day writing his waking thoughts and, by turn, the story of his life. 7:30 p.m. Browsing Room, Knight Library. Free. For information, call 346-4331, Ext. 228.

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## China and the World Economy: The Challenges of Sustainable Development

Thursday, May 3 - Panel Discussion

### The World Trade Organization and Chinese Forestry

Dr. Changjin Sun, Director, Research Center of Ecological and Environmental Economics (RCEEE) at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing

### China's Western Development Strategy and the International Community: Meeting The Challenges of Sustainability

Mr. Jinlin Yang, Director, International Financial Institutions Division II of International Department, Ministry of Finance of China, Beijing

### China's Accession to the World Trade Organization, Agriculture Policy Change and its Environmental Implications

Dr. Tom HuTao, Director of Environmental Economics Program of Policy Research Center of State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) of China, Beijing

University of Oregon - 128 Chiles Center  
7:30 pm

This series is sponsored by the Freeman Foundation and Center for Asian and Pacific Studies. For more information, call 346-1521.

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