



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY  
February 2, 1971

NHTSA -- 21-71  
(202) 426-0686

The Department of Transportation moved today to require improved rear vision systems in automobiles and to eliminate dangerous blind spots to the left and right rear of all motor vehicles.

The Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that would revise Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 111, "Rearview Mirrors." The proposal would require indirect visibility systems for motor vehicles that would allow drivers to monitor the motoring environment not in their direct field of view.

Douglas W. Toms, Acting Administrator of the Traffic Safety Administration, said today's standard rearview mirrors offer the driver inadequate indirect fields of view to the sides of the vehicles and a limited one to the rear. "In many cars, the field of view through the inside mirror is blocked by passengers. The problem is most evident on passenger cars when design combines fastback rooflines with wide "C" pillars, presenting the inside rearview mirror with a restricted field of view," Toms said.

Statistical data show that 22.5 percent of all motor vehicle crashes, or approximately six million crashes per year, occur in the indirect field of view area to the sides and rear. "Systems providing broad and clear vision to the rear, in general use, have the potential of reducing this number of accidents by over a million per year," Toms said.

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Current Standard No. 111 applies only to passenger cars and multipurpose passenger vehicles. The proposed revision would broaden the coverage to include trucks, buses and motorcycles.

Because of differences in vehicle configuration and leadtime problems, the proposed requirements differentiate among vehicle types, and have different effective dates.

Under the proposal, effective January 1, 1973, rear visibility requirements for multipurpose vehicles, trucks, and buses, could be met with a combination of plane and convex mirrors on either side of the vehicle.

Passenger cars would have to meet initial requirements for wide-angle rear vision systems by January 1, 1974, and broader requirements as of January 1, 1976.

The current Standard requires the inside mirror in passenger cars to deliver at least a 20 degree horizontal field of view. By January 1, 1974, the requirement calls for a field of view ranging between 53 and 62 degrees while the wide angle range would be enlarged to 82 to 90 degrees by the proposed January 1, 1976 date.

As of January 1, 1976, the requirements must be met by one image display inside the vehicle. An "over-the-top" or "periscope" system is not specified in the proposal, but this type of device may prove to be the most effective way of meeting the proposed performance requirements.

Motorcycles manufactured on or after January 1, 1973, would be required to have at least two rearview mirrors. For school buses, additional requirements are proposed for areas in front of the vehicle that may not be directly visible to the driver.

The proposal also specifies location limits for image displays, such as mirrors or other rearview devices, so that such displays will not interfere with the portions of a driver's direct field of view.

Interested persons are invited to submit data, views, and arguments on the proposed rulemaking by the close of business on April 22, 1971.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY  
February 8, 1971

NHTSA -- 24-71  
(202) 426-0686

The Department of Transportation announced today that the Uniroyal Tire Company has agreed to pay \$7,000 in compromise of a civil penalty claim that it produced tires in violation of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966.

Involved in the case were size 8.55 x 14, 4 ply nylon Uniroyal Tiger Paw tires and size 8.55 x 14, 4-ply nylon Mohawk Bonanza tires made for Mohawk by Uniroyal. The two types of tires were produced in 1968.

The company also markets other lines and sizes of Tiger Paw tires which were not involved in this investigation.

Tests conducted for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on the nylon Tiger Paw tires showed that 2 out of 7 failed the high speed test and 9 out of 49 failed the endurance test. The tests on the Mohawk Bonanza nylon tires indicated that 6 out of 55 failed the endurance test.

The company challenged the validity of the test results but agreed to the compromise settlement in lieu of a court trial. The Safety Administration has notified Uniroyal that it is closing its files in the case.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY  
February 9, 1971

NHTSA -- 25-71  
(202) 426-0686

As a result of petitions for reconsideration filed by various vehicle and equipment manufacturers, the Department of Transportation is making certain technical changes in a Federal Standard covering lamps, reflective devices, and associated equipment for motor vehicles.

The Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued an Amendment last October 31 that upgrades Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 108, which deals with motor vehicle lighting.

General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler petitioned for an extension of the July 1, 1971, effective date of the Amendment, contending that compliance was impracticable for the few 1971 models remaining to be built before the end of the model run. The Safety Administration, therefore, has extended the overall effective date of the amended Standard to January 1, 1972.

This and other significant revisions relating to effective dates for selected requirements, installation of certain lamps, sampling provisions for testing of turn and hazard warning signal flashers, and durability test requirements of turn signal operating units for motorcycles are included in the Amendment.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY A.M.  
February 9, 1971

NHTSA -- 29-71  
(202) 426-0686

The Department of Transportation announced today the key provisions of a motor vehicle safety standard requiring improved crash protection for motor vehicle occupants until passive restraint systems become mandatory.

Requirements contained in the first part of the Occupant Crash Protection Standard apply to passenger cars beginning January 1, 1972. They were released by the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to enable motor vehicle manufacturers to initiate preparation for production.

The final version of the Standard, which will represent a response to petitions for reconsideration of the rule published November 3, 1970, and which makes passive restraint safety devices mandatory, is expected to be issued soon.

According to the statement issued today, automobile manufacturers are given three options for providing the improved occupant crash protection. The options are:

1. A complete passive protection system that would require no action by vehicle occupants, but would protect them from serious injury in a crash at speeds up to 30 miles per hour.

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Occupant protection in both front and rear seats is required in frontal, angular, lateral and rollover crashes. A variety of systems could be used to meet this requirement including self-fastening belt systems, crash deployed nets, improved cushioning of the vehicle interior, "blankets," and air bags.

2. A lap belt system that is required to protect front seat occupants in a 30 mph frontal barrier crash and is releasable by a pushbutton action. Automatic-locking or emergency-locking retractors are required for the lap belts in both front and rear outside seats.

3. A combination lap-and-shoulder belt system in the front outside seating positions, with lap belts at the other positions. Requirements for lap-belt retractors, method of release, and for ranges of adjustment are the same as in the second option.

Under both the second and third options offered manufacturers, a belt warning system is required to activate both an audible and a visible warning when the front seats are occupied and seat belts are not used. The required warning signals must not activate when the transmission gear selector is in a "park" or "neutral" position. A system that prevents starting the vehicle until belts are fastened is permitted at the manufacturer's option.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR THURSDAY RELEASE  
February 11, 1971

NHTSA -- 27-71  
(202) 426-0686

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe today hailed a recent District Court decision sustaining the validity of a Government regulation on regrooved tires as a significant victory for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

On January 12, 1971, Judge Joseph C. Waddy of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ruled in favor of the Government in a lawsuit brought by the National Association of Motor Bus Owners, the American Trucking Association, and the American Transit Association against the Department of Transportation.

The suit sought to invalidate regrooved tire regulations issued by the Traffic Safety Administration in 1969. A regrooved tire is defined as "a tire, either original tread or retread, on which the tread pattern has been renewed or a new tread or retread has been produced by cutting into the tread of a worn tire to a depth equal to or deeper than the molded original groove depth." Most regrooved tires are used on buses or taxicabs, although their use in the trucking industry is increasing.

Secretary Volpe said "the validity and scope of these important safety regulations have now received judicial indorsement and definition. Judge Waddy's decision has a significant impact on highway safety regarding both the interstate and intrastate use of buses and trucks and other vehicles."

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The regulations challenged in the lawsuit establish the conditions under which regrooved tires may be sold, offered for sale, introduced for sale, or delivered for introduction into interstate commerce. The regulations require regrooved tires to conform to requirements relating to the depth of undertread, the minimum amount of tread edges per linear foot of tread, the width of grooves, passages for the escape of fluids from the tread, and absence of visible defects.

An amendment to the regulations prohibits the use of regrooved tires on the front wheels of buses, and prohibits truck operators from using regrooved tires on the front wheels of their vehicles unless the tires meet minimum load-carrying capacity requirements.

In their lawsuit, the plaintiffs argued that the regulation requiring that there be a 3/32 inch of undertread below the grooves of the regrooved tire would reduce the useful life of the tire by 15 percent. They attacked the validity of the regulations contending they were defective. In addition, they argued that the regulations were inapplicable to intrastate carriers, such as inner city bus companies.

In denying plaintiffs' motion for summary judgment, the Court held that the regulations relating to the Regrooved Tires are within the statutory authority of the Department of Transportation, "are not vague, uncertain nor ambiguous, and are not arbitrary and capricious."

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR FRIDAY RELEASE  
February 12, 1971

NHTSA -- 26-71  
(202) 426-0686

The Department of Transportation wants to give occupants of multipurpose passenger vehicles, such as motor homes and chassis-mount campers, more protection against possible ejection through the vehicle's side doors.

The Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration proposes to accomplish this by amending Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 206, "Door Locks and Door Retention Components."

Standard No. 206 currently sets requirements for latches and hinges on side doors through which any portion of an occupant in a designated seating position can be seen in a side view. As amended, the Standard would apply to all side doors leading into a passenger compartment containing one or more seating positions, regardless of the location of the seating positions in relation to the side doors.

The proposed effective date of the amendment is January 1, 1972. Interested persons are invited to submit comments, data, or arguments on the proposed amendment by the close of business on April 5, 1971.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY  
February 15, 1971

NHTSA -- 28-71  
(202) 426-0686

The Department of Transportation is changing its procedure that allows interested parties to petition for an extension of time to comment on rulemaking notices.

Under current procedure, a petition for extension of time to comment on a rulemaking notice issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration must be received not later than three days before the expiration of the comment period specified in the notice.

The Safety Administration said the three-day requirement has proven unsatisfactory since it does not allow the Agency sufficient time to process the petition, and notify the petitioner whether his request for more time has been denied or granted.

Effective immediately, petitions for extensions of time must be submitted not later than 10 days before the expiration of the comment period. This will provide time for Agency action within the comment period, and for petitioners whose petitions are denied to submit comments, if they wish, before the comment period expires.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY  
February 22, 1971

NHTSA -- 33-71  
Tel. 202-426-0686

The Department of Transportation issued a new regulation today requiring motor vehicle manufacturers to keep the government better informed on the effectiveness of their safety defect recall campaigns.

Under the regulation, manufacturers are required to file comprehensive reports with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration within five days after a defect in a vehicle has been determined to be safety-related.

Manufacturers also will be required, effective August 16, 1971, to submit a quarterly report on defect notification campaigns and on motor vehicle production within 25 working days after the end of each calendar quarter. The regulation also will require manufacturers to provide the Traffic Safety Administration with copies of communications with dealers and purchasers concerning defects.

Currently, manufacturers report some data on safety defect recall campaigns, but no information on owner response to defect notification, or on the actual number of vehicles found to be defective.

The regulation is aimed at enabling the Traffic Safety Administration to conduct a continuing analysis of the adequacy of manufacturers' defect notification campaigns, corrective action taken, owner response, and to compare the defect incidence rate among different groups of motor vehicles.

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The new regulation requires that each defect report contain identifying classifications of the vehicles potentially affected by the defect and the dates of manufacture; total number of vehicles potentially affected by the defect; estimated percentage of the potentially affected vehicles that contain the defect; a description of the defect; a statement of measures to be taken to repair the defect; and three copies of all notices and other communications related directly to the defect that are sent to more than one dealer or purchaser.

The manufacturer also will be required to submit quarterly status reports indicating the number of vehicles involved in a notification campaign; the number estimated to contain the defect; the number inspected by or at the direction of the manufacturer; the number of inspected vehicles found to contain the defect; the number of vehicles for which corrective measures have been completed, and the number of vehicles determined to be unreachable for inspection because of theft, exportation, scrapping, or for other reasons.

The regulation requires the manufacturer to include this information in the quarterly reports for six consecutive quarters beginning with the quarter in which the defect campaign was initiated, or until corrective action has been completed on all defective vehicles involved in the campaign.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY A.M.  
February 23, 1971

NHTSA -- 31-71  
(202) 426-0686

The Department of Transportation announced today that the Fiat Motor Company has agreed to pay \$100,000 in compromise of a civil penalty claim against the firm for alleged violations of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966.

Douglas W. Toms, Acting Administrator of the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, said the company imported into the United States from Italy 1,826 of its Fiat 850 Sedans and 8,150 Fiat 850 Coupes certified as meeting all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. All of the vehicles were manufactured after January 1, 1968.

Toms said that compliance testing conducted for the Traffic Safety Administration by independent laboratories showed, however, that these vehicles did not, in fact, meet the five inch steering column rearward displacement limitation of Standard No. 204.

Standard 204 requires that the steering column of a vehicle be pushed backward toward the driver no more than five inches in a test collision with a rigid barrier at 30 miles per hour.

In accepting the compromise offer of \$100,000, Toms noted that Fiat had recalled and retrofitted with new steering columns at

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its own expense not only the defective vehicles manufactured after the effective date of Standard 204, but additional vehicles with the same steering columns whose manufacture predated the Standard.

Under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, manufacturers are liable for a fine of \$1,000 for each violation and up to \$400,000 for a related series of violations.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY A.M.  
February 24, 1971

NHTSA -- 32-71  
Tel. 202-426-0686

The Department of Transportation announced today that the Armstrong Rubber Company has agreed to pay \$6,500 in compromise of a civil penalty claim that it produced tires in violation of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966.

Involved in the case were size 7.35 x 14, 4 ply nylon Armstrong Premium Coronet tires. The tires in question were produced in 1968. Armstrong had previously agreed to recall approximately 15,000 of these tires at the request of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Tests conducted for the Traffic Safety Administration on the nylon Premium Coronet tires showed that 16 out of 50 failed the high speed test.

The company challenged the validity of the test results but agreed to the compromise settlement in lieu of a court trial. The Traffic Safety Administration has notified Armstrong that it is closing its files in the case.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY  
February 25, 1971

NHTSA -- 30-71  
(202) 426-0686

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, with the approval of President Nixon, has appointed Dr. Charles H. Hartman as Deputy Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Dr. Hartman joined the Safety Administration (formerly known as the National Highway Safety Bureau until recent enactment of the National Highway Safety Act of 1970) as Deputy Director for Programs in June 1970.

Preceding his service with the Federal Government, Dr. Hartman held university teaching and research posts at several universities, as well as a series of administrative positions in privately supported highway safety organizations.

He is a native of Pennsylvania and holds a Bachelor's Degree from Pennsylvania's Millersville State College where he first became interested in highway safety. Following military service, he taught high school driver education. Later, he pursued traffic administration graduate work completing a Master's and a Doctor's Degree at Michigan State University.

Dr. Hartman served for five years as a university faculty member at Illinois State University and the University of Wisconsin. He left university life to join the staff of the Automotive Safety Foundation in 1963. He advanced through several positions in the Foundation and filled the post of Director of Education and Manpower Development.

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When the Foundation was merged with two other national organizations in January 1970 to form the Highway Users Federation, Dr. Hartman was named Director of the Federation's Highway Safety Division. He continued in that position until appointment to his Federal post in June 1970.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR FRIDAY RELEASE  
February 26, 1971

NHTSA -- 35-71  
Tel. 202-426-0686

The Department of Transportation issued a new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard today which specifies requirements for air brake systems on trucks, buses, and trailers.

The purpose of the Standard is to insure that the braking performance of these large vehicles will compare favorably with passenger cars. In addition to a substantial reduction in stopping distance, the Standard is expected to eliminate the primary cause of truck-trailer jackknifing.

The Standard, written by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, establishes a set of requirements to govern the braking behavior of a vehicle during application of the service brakes and the parking brakes. The Safety Administration last June issued two separate proposed rulemaking actions on air brake systems, one for trucks and buses and one for trailers, but now has combined the pair into one Standard.

Among the major points of the Standard are stopping performance levels that include stopping distance requirements for trucks and buses, and lateral stability and wheel lockup requirements for all vehicles equipped with air brake systems.

The Standard requires that trucks and buses meet the stopping distance requirements without locking the wheels, and that trailers also stop with comparable air line pressure without locking the wheels. A locking wheel loses all directional stability and jackknifing is frequently the result.

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The Standard does not specify the manner in which lockup is prevented, but if a manufacturer chooses to provide an antilock device, it must conform to several requirements. A warning signal must be provided to warn of total system failure, a failed device must not interfere with the normal operation of the service brake, and electrical elements in a trailer's systems must be powered through the vehicle's stop lamp circuit.

The Standard also requires that the parking brake system on all such vehicles be actuated automatically if air pressure falls below a specified point.

The requirements of the new Standard will not go into effect until January 1, 1973, since the greater brake capacity will require the design and tooling of stronger axles, suspensions and cargo tie down methods as well as the brake system itself.

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