

Auto Safety Report

Reducing Crashes with Smart Safety Systems

(NAPSA)—Staying on the road to safety is no accident.

On average, one person is killed every minute in car crashes around the world—that's more than half a million deaths annually. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in the year 2003, there were 42,643 auto-related deaths and nearly three million auto-related injuries in the U.S. alone. That's one fatality in the U.S. every 12 minutes.

"Today, vehicles have active safety equipment, which can help prevent crashes from happening in the first place, and help save lives," said Bill Kozyra, president and CEO, Continental Teves North America. "Active safety systems help drivers keep their vehicles in control and on the road. These systems are not 'gadgets' or 'accessories' that complicate the driving experience, but rather enrich it by making 'smarter' and safer vehicles."

A few baseline active safety systems you should look for in your next new vehicle include:

Anti-lock brake systems (ABS) regulate brakes to help prevent wheel lock-up during stops. It helps prevent skidding, so the driver can steer and maneuver around obstacles.

Traction Control Systems (TCS) apply brakes at the drive wheels and reduce engine power to help reduce wheel spin during acceleration. It works across a full range of speeds, whether you're accelerating after a stop or passing on the highway.



Electronic Stability Control (ESC) builds on ABS and TCS and is a stability enhancement system designed to electronically detect and automatically assist drivers in critical driving situations. ESC compares the driver's intended course with the vehicle's actual course and compensates for any differences. As one auto expert says, "It's the greatest feature in your car you'll never know saved your life."

Active Rollover Protection (ARP) can help prevent rollover crashes from occurring. The next step in ESC systems, ARP monitors when a driver enters a potential rollover situation, detects the danger, and works to keep the vehicle on all four wheels. The system rapidly applies the brakes with a high burst of pressure to the appropriate wheel(s) to interrupt the rollover before it occurs, potentially reducing the chance of a crash, and in turn, saving lives.

For more information on automotive safety, visit www.drive.saferamerica.org, www.safelythere.com or www.contitevesna.com.