

Report Airbag Deployment During Extrication

We, at NHTSA, are concerned with EMS and rescuer safety during traffic crash related extrications. In order to determine if additional safety countermeasures are needed, it is essential to establish the actual prevalence of incidents of inadvertent deployment of automotive safety devices during extrication. This information is critical to us and our Special Crash Investigation Program (SCI), whether the rescuer is injured or not.

I have attached a copy of a letter which is being sent to your licensed ground ambulance transport agencies. Knowing that the majority of agencies in your states are volunteer and communications of this nature may not be read or easily shared with the entire company, I am asking that you: 1) post at least the contact portion (see below) of this letter on your state EMS web-site; 2) share it with your State EMS Association's leadership for similar action; and 3) when addressing EMS groups, remind them to report these incidents. In order for NHTSA to work with our national partners to address concerns about potential hazards associated with motor vehicle crash extrication, we need to have the incident information to be able to make safety countermeasure recommendations.

ATTENTION RESCUERS: Please report inadvertent automobile crash extrication related deployments of safety equipment (i.e. airbags, seat belt pre-tensioners etc.) via one of the following options:

1. By phone (202) 366-2545 or (877) 201-3172
2. By email, SCI@nhtsa.dot.gov
3. By facsimile (202) 366-5374, Attention: SCI Program
4. By mail:

U.S. DOT – NHTSA
Special Crash Investigation Program (NPO-122)
Attn: Thomas Roston
400 Seventh St., SW, Room 6213
Washington, DC 20590

The safety of emergency services personnel is of paramount importance to NHTSA. The agency will carefully review all reported hazards involving vehicle safety equipment and in concert with its national partners, take action to ensure emergency responders' safety. For additional information about this or other EMS needs, please contact me, Linda Dodge, at 303-969-6921 or email me at linda.dodge@nhtsa.dot.gov.

Thank you for your assistance in helping us to keep those safe, who come to our aid during our times of risk and need for emergency medical care. Linda Dodge