

## **DID YOU KNOW???**

### **REAR AUTOBRAKE SHOWS BENEFITS**

A very recent “Did You Know” article reviewed the dangers of backing crashes and strongly suggested that reverse parking, where you back into a parking space or into your driveway is safer than driving in and backing out later. In spite of this advice, I doubt if many will change their habits.

According to the National Safety Council, one out of four vehicle crashes can be blamed on poor backing techniques. Backing crashes cause up to 250-500 deaths and 15,000 injuries per year. This should not be acceptable to anyone. So, even if you refuse to accept the benefits of reverse parking, there is still good news – significant benefits from the relatively new technology of “rear autobrake” and “park-assist” technologies.

Park-assist systems encompass several technologies. Parking sensors issue warning beeps and/or seat vibrations when the equipped vehicle gets too close to another vehicle or object directly behind it, or, in some cases, in front of it. Rear cross-traffic alert warns drivers of approaching vehicles that might cross their path as they back up. Rear autobrake systems detect objects behind a reversing vehicle and may automatically brake if the driver doesn't heed alerts to stop.

Research from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) and the Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDI) indicates that park-assist technologies prevent crashes, and rear autobrake shows the most benefits. This information comes from the IIHS's February issue of “Status Report”. General Motors' rear autobrake system is reducing backing crashes reported to police by 62 percent, a new IIHS study has found. Rear autobrake systems from GM and Subaru also are reducing the frequency of claims reported to insurers, HLDI reported in August.

Bolstered by research showing that park-assist systems reduce backing crashes, the IIHS has launched a program to rate the performance of rear autobrake, which is designed to prevent or mitigate the kinds of everyday low-speed backing crashes that happen in parking lots and garages. IIHS engineers evaluated rear autobrake systems on six popular 2017 model vehicles — the BMW 5 series sedan, Cadillac XT5 SUV, Infiniti QX60 SUV, Jeep Cherokee SUV, Subaru Outback wagon and Toyota Prius hatchback. The Subaru Outback and Cadillac XT5 earn the highest rating of superior when equipped with optional rear autobrake, parking sensors and rear cross-traffic alert. The Cherokee, 5 series, QX60 and Prius earn an advanced rating with this optional gear.

"There were no surprises here," says David Zuby, the Institute's executive vice president and chief research officer. "The Subaru and GM results are in line with the crash reductions we have seen in real-world police report and insurance loss data."

Separate from the new ratings, IIHS ran demonstration tests to illustrate how parking mishaps can add up to pricey repairs. Engineers conducted four low-speed tests with and without rear autobrake, and then tallied the damage as a claims estimator would. Scenarios included the XT5 backing into a pole and the Outback reversing into a 2016 Chevrolet Cruze. When equipped with rear autobrake, the vehicles didn't strike anything, so there was no damage. Without autobrake was a different story. The XT5 needed an

estimated \$3,477 in repairs after backing into a pole and when the Outback backed into the Cruze's rear bumper, the estimated damage for both cars came to \$1,899.

So, if you won't change your backing habits to back in first and drive out later, at least get a car with the latest safety technology of Park Assist and Rear Autobrake.