

NEWS RELEASE

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Thirty-nine vehicles meet tougher criteria to earn 2014 safety awards from IIHS

ARLINGTON, Va. — Twenty-two vehicles earn the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's highest safety award for 2014, *TOP SAFETY PICK+*, thanks to a high level of protection in crashes and the availability of front crash prevention technology to avoid many collisions in the first place. An additional 17 earn *TOP SAFETY PICK* by meeting the crashworthiness criteria alone.

IIHS is using new criteria for the awards this year. *TOP SAFETY PICK* requires good performance in the Institute's moderate overlap front, side, roof strength and head restraint tests and, for the first time, good or acceptable performance in the small overlap front test introduced in 2012. The same level of performance in those tests, along with at least a basic rating for front crash prevention, is required for the higher accolade, *TOP SAFETY PICK+*.

"We've made it more difficult for manufacturers this year," says IIHS President Adrian Lund. "Following a gradual phase-in, the small overlap crash is now part of our basic battery of tests, and good or acceptable performance should be part of every vehicle's safety credentials. We also felt it was time to offer extra recognition to manufacturers that are offering a proven crash avoidance technology."

IIHS has been awarding *TOP SAFETY PICK* since the 2006 model year and has tightened criteria twice before this year. *TOP SAFETY PICK+* was introduced last year to reward automakers that achieved good or acceptable performance in the small overlap test, in which 25 percent of a vehicle's front end on the driver's side strikes a rigid barrier at 40 mph. The test replicates what happens when the front corner of a vehicle collides with another vehicle or an object like a tree or utility pole.

With the small overlap test now incorporated into the basic *TOP SAFETY PICK* criteria, IIHS is using the *TOP SAFETY PICK+* designation to reward manufacturers that provide the next level of safety. This year, that means vehicles that not only protect their occupants in a crash but also have systems that can prevent or mitigate front-to-rear crashes. Front crash prevention, which includes both warning systems and automatic braking, is intended to help inattentive drivers avoid rear-ending a stopped or slower-moving vehicle in front of them.

IIHS began rating front crash prevention systems earlier this year after research by its affiliate, the Highway Loss Data Institute, showed that forward collision warning and automatic braking systems are reducing crashes. Vehicles can earn basic, advanced



The Mazda 3, a *TOP SAFETY PICK+* winner, earns a good rating in the small overlap front crash test.

or superior ratings for systems offered as standard or optional equipment. A vehicle with a forward collision warning system that meets performance criteria set by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration automatically qualifies for a basic rating. Additional points are awarded for autobrake, based on performance in IIHS track tests at 12 mph and 25 mph.

Front crash prevention systems have been spreading quickly through the vehicle fleet. As a result, there are more 2014 *TOP SAFETY PICK+* winners than regular *TOP SAFETY PICK* winners.

"Consumers who want both crash prevention technology and the latest in occupant protection have a fair number of vehicles to choose from," Lund says. "We hope manufacturers will continue to incorporate front crash prevention, developing more robust systems and adding them to more trim levels or, better yet, making them standard equipment."

The front crash prevention features of the *TOP SAFETY PICK+* winners run the gamut from basic warning systems, such as those offered on the Ford Fusion, Lincoln MKZ and Honda's four winners, to Subaru's EyeSight warning and autobrake system. EyeSight avoids a collision in tests at both 12 mph and 25 mph and is available on the Forester, Legacy and Outback.

Most of the *TOP SAFETY PICK+* winners qualify for the award only when equipped with optional front crash prevention systems. When those vehicles aren't equipped with the features, they still meet the regular *TOP SAFETY PICK* criteria. The Volvo S60, S80 and XC60 and the Honda Civic hybrid earn *TOP SAFETY PICK+* on the basis of standard equipment.

The 2014 *TOP SAFETY PICK+* winners include eight models that didn't earn the award in 2013. Among them are fully redesigned models, including the Acura MDX and RLX, Infiniti Q50, Mazda 3 and the Toyota Highlander. Among *TOP SAFETY PICK* winners, the Chevrolet Spark minicar is a new model.

Some winners that did not undergo a full redesign were modified to improve small overlap performance. This includes the popular Toyota Camry, which now qualifies for *TOP SAFETY PICK*. The 2012-13 Camry models were rated poor for protection in a small overlap front crash, but the 2014 model earns an acceptable rating. The Toyota Prius and the Mazda CX-5 also were tweaked and now earn *TOP SAFETY PICK+*. Changes to these vehicles and some others were made after the 2014 model year started. See the list of winners for manufacture dates.

The Volvo S80, a large luxury car, is new to the *TOP SAFETY PICK+* list because it hadn't been previously tested for small overlap performance. However, it has had the same basic design since 2007, so its good small overlap result applies to earlier models as well.

Honda/Acura has the most winners of any automaker, with six models earning *TOP SAFETY PICK+* and two earning *TOP SAFETY PICK*.

With the changes to the criteria, the number of *TOP SAFETY PICK+* and *TOP SAFETY PICK* winners falls from a combined 130 at the time of the initial announcement of 2013 winners to 39 for 2014. Vehicles that have fallen off the list have less than acceptable ratings for small overlap protection or they haven't been tested yet. All models that made it to the 2013 winners' circle continue to offer a high level of protection in four main crash types — moderate overlap front, side, rollover and rear.

TOP SAFETY PICK+

TOP SAFETY PICK

Minicar		Chevrolet Spark
Small cars	<p>Honda Civic hybrid</p> <p>Mazda 3 <i>built after October 2013</i></p> <p>Toyota Prius <i>built after November 2013</i></p>	<p>Dodge Dart</p> <p>Ford Focus</p> <p>Honda Civic 2-door</p> <p>Hyundai Elantra</p> <p>Scion tC</p> <p>Subaru Impreza</p> <p>Subaru XV Crosstrek</p>
Midsize moderately priced cars	<p>Ford Fusion</p> <p>Honda Accord 2-door</p> <p>Honda Accord 4-door</p> <p>Mazda 6</p> <p>Subaru Legacy</p> <p>Subaru Outback</p>	<p>Chrysler 200</p> <p>Dodge Avenger</p> <p>Kia Optima</p> <p>Nissan Altima</p> <p>Toyota Camry <i>built after November 2013</i></p> <p>Volkswagen Passat</p>
Midsize luxury/near-luxury cars	<p>Infiniti Q50</p> <p>Lincoln MKZ</p> <p>Volvo S60</p>	<p>Acura TL</p>
Large luxury cars	<p>Acura RLX</p> <p>Volvo S80</p>	
Small SUVs	<p>Mazda CX-5 <i>built after October 2013</i></p> <p>Mitsubishi Outlander</p> <p>Subaru Forester</p>	<p>Mitsubishi Outlander Sport</p>
Midsize SUV	<p>Toyota Highlander</p>	
Midsize luxury SUVs	<p>Acura MDX</p> <p>Mercedes-Benz M-Class <i>built after August 2013</i></p> <p>Volvo XC60</p>	<p>Volvo XC90</p>
Minivan	<p>Honda Odyssey</p>	

Note: Except for the Volvo S60, S80 and XC60 and the hybrid version of the Honda Civic 4-door, vehicles listed under *TOP SAFETY PICK+* qualify for that award only when equipped with optional front crash prevention. Front crash prevention isn't available on nonhybrid versions of the Civic.

For more information, go to www.iihs.org

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety is an independent, nonprofit scientific and educational organization dedicated to reducing the losses — deaths, injuries and property damage — from crashes on the nation's roads. The Institute is wholly supported by auto insurers.