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TITLE	Safety News Articles For The Week of September 24 – 28, 2007	Originated: M. Hoffman	
		Reviewed: H. Kato	
		Approved: C. Tinto	

Following is a summary of the articles from major news outlets pertaining to safety issues for the week of September 24, 2007. The articles are attached:

### Summary

“Chrysler Recalls Jeeps for Brake Issue” Article 1 *Detroit Free Press* (September 24, 2007):

- Chrysler recalled 28,755 model year 2007-2008 Jeep Commander & Grand Cherokee SUVs to replace front-brake parts that could fail because they may be made of the wrong type of metal.
- Some brake calipers may have been made with gray iron instead of ductile iron & could fracture, increasing stopping distance & possibly causing an accident.

“Drunken-Driving Fatalities Steadily Rise” Article 2 *New York Times* (September 24, 2007):

- The number of accidents involving a drunken driver in New Jersey rose markedly in each of the past 2 years.
- A total of 224 people died in accidents involving a legally drunken driver in New Jersey in 2006
- While drunken-driving fatalities held constant nationwide, it was the 2nd year in a row that New Jersey's drunken-driving fatalities had risen, but state officials said they could not explain why.
- New Jersey's arrest rate for driving under the influence was about the same in 2005 as it was in 2004.
- Drunken-driving arrest rates in New Jersey are lower than in the rest of the nation, which averaged 454 arrests per 100,000 in 2005, but about the same as in New York, which arrested 297 per 100,000.

“Toyota Recalls Floor Mats That Jam Gas Pedals” Article 3 *Detroit Free Press* (September 27, 2007):

- Toyota will recall floor mats from 55,000 Camry & Lexus ES 350 models due to complaints of unintended acceleration caused by the mats sticking underneath the accelerator pedal.
- “We have also received complaints about the RAV 4 crossover & Tacoma pickup, said Rae Tyson.
- In several of the original complaints, drivers said the vehicles only stopped after an accident.
- Because some ES 350s are sold with stop/start buttons rather than traditional ignitions, some drivers said they were unable to shut off the engine by pressing the button as the car accelerated.
- The recall involves 30,500 mats for the ES 350 & 24,500 mats for the 2007 & 2008 Camry.
- Owners will be told of the recall in October & offered replacement mats in November.
- The company also warned drivers to check their floor mats & make sure that only one was installed.

“Nissan Recalls SUVs for Possible Corrosion” Article 3 *Detroit News* (September 27, 2007):

- Nissan is recalling nearly 420,000 SUV because of possible corrosion in the tube where motorists pump gas.
- The recall involves Nissan Pathfinder & Infiniti QX4 SUVs from the 1997-2001 model years.

Attachments: Safety News Articles

TOYOTA



Monday 24-  
Sep-2007

# Daily News Clips

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Chrysler recalls Jeeps for brake issue  
Detroit Free Press 09/22/2007  
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Chrysler LLC recalled 28,755 Jeep Commander and Grand Cherokee SUVs to replace front-brake parts that could fail because they may be made of the wrong type of metal.

The recall affects 2007 and 2008 models, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said on its Web site. Some brake calipers may have been made with gray iron instead of ductile iron and could fracture, increasing stopping distance and possibly causing an accident, the agency said.

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Toyota: External Affairs

Content: Lone Buffalo, Inc.

TOYOTA



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Drunken-Driving Fatalities Steadily Rise  
New York Times 09/23/2007  
Author: Ford Fessenden  
c. 2007 New York Times Company



When [REDACTED] was driving home from work on April 20, 2006, she had to detour around a stretch of Kinnelon Road, where police and emergency vehicles had gathered at the scene of a traffic accident. She thought little of it.

But over the next several hours, a parent's nightmare unfolded for [REDACTED] and her husband, [REDACTED] who live in Kinnelon. Eventually they learned that their 15-year-old daughter, [REDACTED] and her cousin, [REDACTED] 16, of Jefferson Township, had been killed by a motorist who was later charged with driving while intoxicated.

That scene has increasingly played out in New Jersey, where the number of accidents involving a legally drunken driver in New Jersey rose markedly in each of the past two years.

The [REDACTED] learned about [REDACTED] the hard way. [REDACTED] expected to meet the girls and take them to a movie. They were nowhere to be found, however, and did not answer their cellphones.

A friend of the girls told [REDACTED] she had heard a news report that two people -- boys, she thought, but maybe girls -- had been hurt in an accident on Kinnelon Road, where the girls might have been walking had they set out for the theater on foot. "I had the clue then that it was my daughter," [REDACTED] said. [REDACTED] she and her husband drove to the accident scene.

The police kept them away, but, she said, she saw the confirmation of her worst fear on one officer's face. "I saw one of them blink in a certain way, and I knew, it's both of them, and they died," she said. She was right; a car had struck the girls, the police said, and its driver's blood-alcohol level registered nearly four times the legal limit.

Since that day, [REDACTED] has appeared with a picture of her daughter at every court appearance for the driver, [REDACTED] of Dover. [REDACTED] who has claimed insanity, has not yet been to trial on charges of two counts of first-degree aggravated

[http://tmalive.tma.toyota.com/toyota/story.cfm?story\\_id=2036931](http://tmalive.tma.toyota.com/toyota/story.cfm?story_id=2036931)

9/28/2007

manslaughter and two counts of second-degree death by automobile.

"I want to be there for justice," [REDACTED] said. "I want to stop these drunken drivers."

A total of 224 people died in accidents involving a legally drunken driver in New Jersey in 2006, up from 203 in 2005 and the highest number since 2000, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. While drunken-driving fatalities held constant nationwide, it was the second year in a row that New Jersey's drunken-driving fatalities had risen -- there were 185 in 2004 -- but state officials said they could not explain why.

"We'd love to know the answers ourselves," said Capt. Al Della Fave, a spokesman for the New Jersey State Police. "I don't know if it's a blip on the radar screen or something else."

Fatalities in New York State have declined in each of the last two years. In Connecticut, they went down in 2005 and up in 2006.

Experts say a two-year trend of increasing deaths involving drunken drivers is cause for concern.

"Over the last two decades, the number of alcohol-related deaths has been cut in half," said Ralph W. Hingson, the director of the Division of Epidemiology and Prevention Research at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. "In the context of that, a two-year increase is worrisome."

Dr. Hingson said research had shown that alcohol-related accidents are sensitive to public-awareness campaigns and to the intensity of enforcement efforts, including sobriety checkpoints.

But New Jersey officials said that the state and private groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving have been operating public awareness campaigns with the same intensity as in past years and that enforcement efforts have not lapsed.

"There's been no change of anything," Captain Della Fave said. "Increasing D.W.I. patrols are a matter of course. And the educational campaigns have not slackened."

New Jersey's arrest rate for driving under the influence was about the same in 2005 -- 294 per 100,000 population -- as it was in 2004, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The rate has fallen slightly since 2000, when it was 301. The numbers for 2006 will not be available until Monday.

Drunken-driving arrest rates in New Jersey are lower than in the rest of the nation, which averaged 454 arrests per 100,000 in 2005, but about the same as in New York, which arrested 297 per 100,000.

Captain Della Fave said state police arrests for driving under the influence fell in 2006, to 4,279 from 4,539, but they were higher than in 2004. Officers have made 3,694 arrests so far in 2007. The state police typically account for about one in six drunken-driving arrests statewide, the rest being made by the local police.

Dr. Hingson said the campaign against drunken driving might have become a victim of its own success. "The reductions in drinking and driving over the last two decades have saved 150,000 lives, which is more than the combined lifesaving impact of increases in the use of safety belts, air bags, bicycle helmets and motorcycle helmets," he said.

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9/28/2007

Most of the declines in deaths, however, were in the early 1990s, and death rates have been trending water for the last 10 years.

"It leads people to believe it's been solved and it hasn't," Dr. Hingson said. "Every year, there's a new cohort that enters the driving age."

██████████ is trying to argue that he cannot be held responsible for his actions in the Kinnelon accident because he has no memory of the day and because his alcoholism, and a recent prescription for Librium, rendered him legally insane.

"This case has been a tragedy on both sides," said John Iaciofano, his lawyer.

The ██████████ say the courts should do something to keep ██████████ and other drinkers off the roads.

"We are Muslims and we have faith in God, and we believe in mercy," ██████████ said. "But every morning I wake up and think of her, and every night I think of her, and every minute of our lives we remember her."

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Toyota: External Affairs

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TOYOTA



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Toyota recalls floor mats that jam gas pedals

Problem can occur in Camry, Lexus

Detroit Free Press 09/27/2007

Author: Justin Hyde

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**Toyota** Motor Co. will recall floor mats from 55,000 Camry and Lexus ES 350 models due to complaints of unintended acceleration caused by the mats sticking underneath the accelerator pedal, federal safety officials and the automaker said Wednesday.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration took the unusual step of highlighting **Toyota's** recall announcement, advising owners of other **Toyota** models -- including the Prius hybrid and Avalon sedans -- to ensure their floor mats are properly installed.

"We have also received complaints about the RAV 4" crossover "and Tacoma" pickup, said Rae Tyson, a spokesman for NHTSA. "We will continue to monitor all of the other **Toyota** vehicles not involved in the recall."

As the Free Press first reported last month, NHTSA had opened an investigation into the floor mats after amassing 40 reports of unintended acceleration in 2007 Lexus ES 350 sedans, including eight crashes and 12 injuries.

Since then, NHTSA has received complaints from owners of other **Toyota** models about the problem.

In several of the original complaints, drivers said the vehicles only stopped after an accident. One driver told the agency the vehicle had hit speeds of 100 m.p.h. over a 6-mile stretch of freeway due to the problem.

A Michigan woman said the problem caused her to lose control of her Lexus, triggering a rollover crash on I-75 that totaled her car. Because some ES 350s are sold with stop/start buttons rather than traditional ignitions, some drivers said they were unable to shut off the engine by pressing the button as the car accelerated.

At the time, **Toyota** told safety officials it had identified an optional all-weather floor mat that if not properly secured by clips to the floor could stick under the accelerator pedal; in

[http://tmalive.tma.toyota.com/toyota/story.cfm?story\\_id=2042454](http://tmalive.tma.toyota.com/toyota/story.cfm?story_id=2042454)

9/28/2007

some cases, **Toyota** said owners had simply put the rubber mat over the standard floor mats.

The company contended it had dealt with the problem through a mailing to customers earlier this year.

**Toyota** said Wednesday the recall involves 30,500 mats for the ES 350 and 24,500 mats for the 2007 and 2008 **Toyota** Camry.

Owners will be told of the recall in October and offered replacement mats in November. The company also warned drivers to check their floor mats and make sure that only one was installed.

Sudden and unintended acceleration cases carry a stigma in the U.S. auto industry, due to the collapse of the Audi brand in the late 1980s following a "60 Minutes" report alleging runaway cars. Federal safety officials later cleared Audi, but it took years for the company to rebuild its reputation.

In a separate move, Nissan Motor Co. said it was recalling nearly 420,000 sport utility vehicles because of possible corrosion in the tube where motorists pump gas.

The recall involves Nissan Pathfinder and Infiniti QX4 SUVs from the 1997-2001 model years. More than 370,000 of the vehicles under recall were originally sold or are currently registered in 22 cold weather states and the District of Columbia. Another 45,000 vehicles are in Canada.

Alejandro Bodipo-Memba and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

- Toyota recalls mats that may interfere - The Detroit News 09/27/2007
- Toyota to recall floor mats for crash risk - CNNmoney 09/26/2007
- Toyota to recall Lexus, Camry mats - Los Angeles Times 09/27/2007
- Toyota Recalls 2007-'08 Camry and Lexus ES 350 with All-Weather Floor Mats - Edmunds.com 09/26/2007
- Toyota, Nissan recall mats, fuel tubes - CNNmoney 09/26/2007
- Toyota to recall floor mats in 2007 Lexus, Camrys - Reuters News 09/26/2007
- Prius, Avalon owners: don't stack your floor mats! - AutoBlog.com 09/26/2007
- Wipe your feet: Toyota recalls 55,000 floor mats - AutoBlog.com 09/26/2007

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Nissan recalls SUVs for possible corrosion

The Detroit News 09/27/2007

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Nissan Motor Co. said it was recalling nearly 420,000 sport utility vehicles because of possible corrosion in the tube where motorists pump gas. The recall involves Nissan Pathfinder and Infiniti QX4 SUVs from the 1997-2001 model years.

Detroit News staff, wire and Bloomberg News reports.

- Toyota, Nissan issue safety recall in Pa. over mats, tubes - Associated Press  
Newswires 09/26/2007

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