

EYE ON INJURY

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Electronic Stability Control

What is it?

Electronic Stability Control (ESC) is a computerized vehicle system that improves vehicle handling by instantly detecting and preventing skids. When the ESC system in your vehicle detects skidding, it automatically brakes individual wheels to counter understeering and oversteering.

How effective is it?

Through research done by the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety, ESC has been shown to prevent 40% of single vehicle crashes, 43% of all crash fatalities, 56% of single vehicle fatalities, and 80% of rollover fatalities. ESC is second only to seatbelts in the number of lives saved due to use of safety devices.

What other names is ESC known by?

Depending on the manufacturer of the vehicle, ESC can have many different names. These include:

- Electronic Stability Program (ESP) – Audi, VW, Saab, Daimler, Chrysler
- Vehicle Stability control (VSC) – Toyota, Lexus
- Vehicle Stability Assist (VSA) – Honda, Acura
- Advance Trac – Ford, Lincoln
- StabiliTrak – General Motors, Saturn
- Vehicle Dynamic(s) Control (VDC) – Subaru, Nissan
- Dynamic Stability Control (DSC) – Mazda, BMW, Rover
- Dynamic Stability & Traction Control (DSTC) – Volvo

If it is so effective, why isn't it required in all vehicles?

Currently in Canada, ESC is not required in all vehicles. It is proposed to have this feature mandatory by 2012 for all Canadian made vehicles. Other countries have already made commitment for this to become reality. For example, the United States is in the process of phasing in this requirement and has 2012 as their completion target date. Some sectors of transportation are leading the way in promoting this technology. For example, in Quebec, all dangerous goods carriers have been required to have ESC in their vehicles since 2006.

Information adapted from Glen Nicholson (ppt presentation – 2009)

Did you know ... electronic stability control is optional or standard on over half of new vehicle models sold in Canada?



What's New?:

- For a chance to win 1 of 4 \$25.00 Chapters/Indigo Gift Certificates, complete the survey at: www.capitalhealth.ca/kidsafe.
Contest closes Dec. 15, 2009

Upcoming Events:

- December is *Holiday Fire Safety Month* (www.aema.alberta.ca)
- December 1-7, 2009 is *National Safe Driving Week* (www.safety-council.org)
- December - 'Impaired Driving' is the Alberta Traffic Safety Plan's focus (www.saferoads.com)

What's On the Web?

- Kidsafe Alberta - www.capitalhealth.ca/kidsafe
- Insurance Institute of Highway Safety - www.iihs.org
- Choose ESC Campaign - www.chooseesc.eu

Quiz

1. What does ESC stand for?
2. What are 3 other names/abbreviations for ESC?