

Press Release

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Unsecured loads in cars major threat to safety on summer getaways according to European survey by Goodyear Dunlop

'An eight kilogram dog can strike front passengers with a weight of up to 400 kilos in a collision at 50km/h'

Brussels, Belgium, June 23, 2011 – Millions of European drivers taking to the roads on holiday this summer risk increasing the severity of road accidents by failing to correctly load their cars, according to a major survey conducted by Goodyear Dunlop.

Goodyear Dunlop asked over 5,600 motorists in 15 countries across Europe for their views on the demands and distractions of summer driving as part of its 2011 'Leave Prepared, Arrive Safe' Road Safety campaign.

Alarming, one in three drivers (equating to millions of motorists across Europe) did not know where to store heavy items in the car. Older drivers, male drivers, and those from Switzerland, Belgium and Austria were most likely to get the right answer, whilst Italian and Polish respondents were least likely to do so. Heaviest items should be stowed low down in the boot of the car, as close to the back seats as possible. Equally important, station wagons should be driven with a protection net or set of bars between the boot and passenger compartment ensuring that no items can enter the passenger area.

If the heaviest loads are put in the roof rack, it can significantly influence the vehicle's handling behavior by changing the centre of gravity and increasing the rollover risk. Drivers of fully loaded vehicles have to anticipate longer stopping distances and different handling behaviors.

Furthermore, very few people (just over one-in-10) appreciated the destructive impact that an item kept in the passenger compartment can have during a collision.

"There is a major risk of objects within the car turning into missiles in an accident. For example, a glass bottle, laptop or toy kept in the back of the car will hit the front passenger with up to 50 times its own bodyweight in a collision at 50km/h," explains Jens Völmicke, Director Corporate Communications, for Goodyear Dunlop Europe. "Also, never exceed the highest vehicle load – and don't forget maximum numbers include the weight of the passengers."

With three in four Europeans planning to go on their summer holiday by car this season, proper preparation is key to ensuring more safety on Europe's roads.

Based on a thorough evaluation of the survey data, Goodyear Dunlop has developed 'Top Summer Safety Tips' to help drivers reduce the dangers of the summer exodus:

- Prepare yourself – Ensure you are hydrated, rested, and have left ample time for your journey
- Check your car's condition – Ensure that you have performed basic maintenance before you set off

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- Prepare for the journey – Ensure you know your route and the rules of the road along the way
- Ensure the car is loaded correctly – make sure passengers are secure and luggage stored safely
- Check your tires – Ensure you have sufficient tread depth and the correct tire pressures

Goodyear Dunlop will reveal further survey results over the coming summer period.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Survey Methodology:

- The study was carried out by APCO Insight on behalf of “Goodyear Dunlop Europe” to better understand licensed drivers’ summer holiday driving behavior, and their road safety awareness, beliefs, and practices.
- A total of 5,622 European drivers were surveyed, in Austria (350), Belgium (378), Bulgaria (378), the Czech Republic (378), France (378), Germany (378), Italy (378), Poland (378), Romania (378), Russia (378), Slovakia (378), Slovenia (378), Spain (378), Switzerland (354), and the UK (377).
- Fieldwork was carried out from May 12 to 31, 2011.
- Interviews were conducted online in the local language of each country.
- Respondents had to: Have a valid driver’s license, be older than 18, and be an active driver.

About Goodyear Dunlop:

- Goodyear has 111 years’ worth of experience in developing a vital part of any vehicle - the tire. We believe that we have a responsibility be involved in the tire safety debate, and we want to contribute to safer mobility.
- In Europe, Goodyear Dunlop is a signatory to The European Road Safety Charter (ERSC).
- Goodyear Dunlop supported the idea of an EU Tire Label that makes it easier for consumers to judge tire performance from an environmental and safety perspective.
- Goodyear Dunlop has supported the mandatory introduction of the Tire Pressure Monitoring System – an electronic system designed to monitor the air pressure inside a tire – in all new passenger cars from 2012, and all cars from 2014.
- Goodyear Dunlop also supports the idea of member states bringing in laws around winter tires to improve road safety in winter conditions.
- Goodyear Dunlop is engaging with stakeholders to demonstrate the importance of road safety.

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