

Why shouldn't we use the new 15-Passenger Vans?

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) identifies the 15-passenger van as a dangerous vehicle. Multiple deaths within our church organizations occurred due to the use of 15-passenger vans. The NHTSA reports that 653 occupants of 15-passenger vans were killed during 2004-2013 alone. **All church organizations are encouraged to use other vehicles that are safe and verified.**

If your church organization is in the process of selling any 15-passenger vans, it is strongly encouraged that these vehicles are disposed of immediately. If your local church board still chooses to use these dangerous vehicles, these NHTSA guidelines should be followed to provide as much safety as possible.

- **Never overload the vehicle.** The **NHTSA recently said:** *"Recognizing that 15-passenger vans are particularly sensitive to loading, the agency warns users never to overload these vehicles under any circumstances. NHTSA research shows overloading 15-passenger vans both increases rollover risk and makes the vehicle more unstable in any handling maneuvers."*
- Before every trip, **check** the tires for proper inflation and no signs of wear or damage. Correct tire size and inflation pressure information can be found in the owner's manual and on the door pillar.
- If you are a **passenger**, make sure you buckle up for every trip.
- **Owners** should have a pre-use checklist and use it before driving the vehicle.
- **Owners** should have suspension and steering components inspected according to the manufacturer's recommended schedule and replace or repair these parts as necessary.



Who Needs a CDL (Commercial Driver's License)?

You Must Have a CDL to Operate:

- Any single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 26,001 pounds or more.
- A combination vehicle with a gross combination weight rating (GCWR) of 26,001 or more pounds, provided the GVWR of the vehicle(s) being towed is in excess of 10,000 pounds.
- Any vehicle that tows any vehicle with a GVWR of 10,001 pounds or more.
- Any vehicle that tows more than one vehicle or a trailer bus.
- A vehicle designed to transport 10 or more passengers (including the driver).
- Any size vehicle which requires hazardous material placards or is carrying material listed as a select agent or toxin in Title 42, [Code of Federal Regulations](#)(CFR), Part 73.
- Transports hazardous wastes ([California Health and Safety Code](#) (CHSC) §§25115 and 25117).
- Federal regulations through the Department of Homeland Security require a background check and fingerprinting for the hazardous materials endorsement.



Note: Employees of school districts, private schools, community colleges, and California State Universities who operate 15-passenger vans must have a CDL with a passenger transport vehicle (PV) endorsement. A 15-passenger van is a van manufactured to accommodate 15 passengers, including the driver, or a van "designed" to carry 15 passengers, including the driver, even if seats have been removed to accommodate fewer than 15 passengers.