

INSURANCE INSTITUTE FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY

NEWS RELEASE

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NEW CRASH TEST RESULTS: SUBARU FORESTER IS *TOP SAFETY PICK*

ARLINGTON, VA — The redesigned 2009 Subaru Forester, a small SUV, earns the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's *TOP SAFETY PICK* award. Winners afford superior overall crash protection among the vehicles in their class. To qualify, a vehicle must earn the highest rating of good in the Institute's front, side, and rear tests and be equipped with electronic stability control.

Criteria to win are tough because the award is intended to drive continued safety improvements such as top crash test ratings and the rapid addition of electronic stability control, which is standard on the Forester.

"Recognizing vehicles at the head of the class for safety helps consumers distinguish the best overall choices without having to sort through multiple test results," says Institute president Adrian Lund.

Number of vehicles earning award increases: Only 13 cars, minivans, and SUVs initially qualified for 2007 awards. Now 37 models earn the designation. As automakers introduce new models or make safety changes to existing ones, the Institute adds winners throughout the year.

"The performance of the Forester underscores Subaru's commitment to delivering state-of-the-art safety to its customers," Lund says. "You don't know what kind of crash you're going to be in. That's why it's important to choose a vehicle that will protect you in all kinds of crashes. The *TOP SAFETY PICK* designation is intended to help people find the safest choices."

How vehicles are evaluated: The Institute's frontal crashworthiness evaluations are based on results of 40 mph frontal offset crash tests. Each vehicle's overall evaluation is based on measurements of intrusion into the occupant compartment,

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injury measures recorded on a Hybrid III dummy in the driver seat, and analysis of slow-motion film to assess how well the restraint system controlled dummy movement during the test.

Side evaluations are based on performance in a crash test in which the side of a vehicle is struck by a barrier moving at 31 mph. The barrier represents the front end of a pickup or SUV. Ratings reflect injury measures recorded on two instrumented SID-IIIs dummies, assessment of head protection countermeasures, and the vehicle's structural performance during the impact. Injury measures obtained from the two dummies, one in the driver seat and the other in the back seat behind the driver, are used to determine the likelihood that a driver and/or passenger in a similar real-world crash would sustain serious injury to various parts of the body. The movements and contacts of the dummies' heads during the test also are evaluated. Structural performance is based on measurements indicating the amount of B-pillar intrusion into the occupant compartment.

Rear crash protection is rated according to a two-step procedure. Starting points for the ratings are measurements of head restraint geometry — the height of a restraint and its horizontal distance behind the back of the head of an average-size man. Seats with good or acceptable restraint geometry are tested dynamically using a dummy that measures forces on the neck. This test simulates a collision in which a stationary vehicle is struck in the rear at 20 mph. Seats without good or acceptable geometry are rated poor overall because they can't be positioned to protect many people.

End 2-page news release on crashworthiness ratings of Subaru Forester
For more information go to www.iihs.org