

# Car Care Corner

## Blueprint For Building A Better SUV

(NAPSA)—Citing poor safety and gas mileage records of the average sport utility vehicle (SUV), the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) and the Center for Auto Safety have released a blueprint for what they describe as a safe and fuel-efficient SUV.



**Studies show it is possible to build a safer and more fuel efficient SUV.**

Studies show SUV occupants were nearly three times as likely to die from a rollover accident compared with car occupants in 2003. In addition, on average, today's SUVs tend to lack much of the modern, fuel-efficient technology commonly used in cars, often burning 40 percent more gasoline than the average car.

As a result, the average SUV owner can pay more than \$11,000 for gasoline over the life of a vehicle—\$3,200 more than car owners.

“SUVs aren't the problem; poor automaker designs and weak government standards are,” said David Friedman, director of research for UCS's Clean Vehicles Program and lead engineer on the blueprint.

The UCS has created designs for the Guardian and Guardian XSE, SUV prototypes. The Guardian features a sleek and lower unibody design, stronger materials to reduce vehicle weight and prevent “roof crush,” better seat belts and tires, and an efficient six-cylinder engine. It's believed these features would reduce fatalities and increase gas mileage from 21 mpg to 27.8.

It's estimated these improvements, which would cost less than \$750 per SUV, would pay for themselves in reduced gasoline costs in a little more than two years.

To learn more, visit the Web site at [www.suvsolutions.org](http://www.suvsolutions.org).