

ROAD TO SAFETY

Survey: Driver Safety and Rudeness Improving on America's Highways

(NAPSA)—We've all witnessed aggressive drivers on the road. They appear in our rear-view mirrors, speeding up until they are within inches of the car. They flash their lights, honk their horns, gesture obscenely and finally careen into another lane to taunt other drivers. As they pass, we notice they are talking on a cell phone without a headset and are eating at the same time.

Fortunately, most Americans do not drive this aggressively. In fact, the fourth annual Nerves of Steel aggressive driver survey revealed that driver safety and rudeness continue to improve in the United States. Seattle earned the title of safest and most polite city for drivers. Boston was the most improved in terms of safety, but the city is still home to the most aggressive drivers among those surveyed. Miami's drivers earned the title of rudest in the nation.

TheSteelAlliance, representing the North American steel producers, conducted the survey.

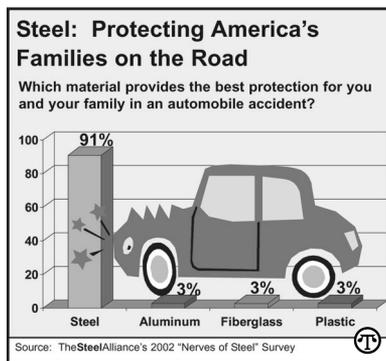
The Nerves of Steel survey also revealed that consumers understand that steel plays a key role in automobile safety.

When asked what items and/or devices provide themselves and their families the best protection in an automobile accident, drivers across the nation's top three choices were seat belts (88 percent), steel frames (84 percent) and steel side-impact beams (77 percent).

"This survey confirms that Americans feel much safer driving a car that has been made with safety in mind and that means one built with steel," said Bill Heenan, president, TheSteelAlliance. "A car's steel frame helps protect families from injury or death in an accident. The steel industry conducted this survey to educate drivers so they can be more courteous to each other on the road, which will hopefully result in fewer accidents."

Survey Methodology

Global Strategy Group conducted the Nerves of Steel survey. Drivers were surveyed nationally by phone and in 10 cities: Boston, Washington, D.C., Miami, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, Dallas, Los Angeles, Seattle and Denver. Seat-



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tle and Denver were added to the survey in 2002. A total of 2,000 participants were asked a series of questions about driving habits, including their own actions while on the road. The questions highlighted issues of safety, aggressiveness and rudeness.

Safe Driving on the Rise

Across all cities surveyed in 2002, safe driving is on the rise. Five cities—Boston, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Chicago and Miami—significantly improved their safety grades over the past year.

The 2002 Nerves of Steel survey revealed that the city with the most aggressive and unsafe drivers was Boston, which earned a C for safety. In the month prior to the survey, 44 percent of Boston's drivers had committed at least four or more aggressive acts on the road. Although Boston is considered the most aggressive and unsafe city, it also earned the title of most improved for safe driving after scoring a failing grade in the 2001 survey.

According to drivers in Seattle, the West Coast is home to the safest roads in America. Seattle's drivers earned an A in safety. Other cities with safe drivers included Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Safety grades are improving as drivers increase their awareness about automobile safety features. Ninety-one percent of surveyed drivers believe that steel is a material that provides the best protection against injury or death in an automobile accident.

Miami Drivers Rudest of All

Fifty-seven percent of drivers in Miami, the highest percentage

of all 10 cities surveyed, believe that the drivers in their city are ruder than drivers in other cities. Miami received an F, earning the champion title for rudest drivers. And when it comes to rudeness, Miami's female drivers outranked their male counterparts in nine of 13 driving categories.

Aside from Miami's F, rudeness grades continue to improve. Three cities raised their grades and five retained their grades from the 2001 survey. Seattle, this year's safest city, also is the winner for the most polite city. Only 11 percent of drivers in Seattle feel that they are ruder than drivers in other cities. Other polite cities include Cleveland, Denver, Detroit and Dallas. Los Angeles drivers were the most improved in the rudeness ranking, raising their grade from a D to a B.

Despite this general trend toward more tolerance on the road, Capital Beltway drivers may soon be on their way to earning the title of the rudest drivers in the country. Drivers in Washington, D.C. were the only drivers to lower their rudeness grade over the past year.

"While great strides have been made among drivers to improve safety and rudeness on the nation's highways, we must remember that all drivers can contribute to even greater improvements in driver safety," said Heenan. "We all need to slow down, be more courteous, and refrain from other distractions while driving. It's also very important to remember that if an aggressive driver bothers you, don't escalate the situation. These drivers are already very dangerous."

It's Dangerous, But...

The Nerves of Steel survey revealed that 58 percent of drivers believe that talking on a cell phone without a headset while driving is very dangerous. Although this is considered to be a dangerous act while driving, 36 percent of consumers admit to doing it themselves.

Pledge to Drive Safely

Visit www.TheNewSteel.com for more information about the 2002 Nerves of Steel aggressive driving survey.