



"Considering every state but one has a law that requires people to be belted in vehicles, it makes no sense they can ride unrestrained in the back of a pickup truck that has no protection at all," said Susan Ferguson, of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. "There's no restraints in the rear, and it's extremely dangerous."

Each year there are 200 deaths resulting from riding in cargo beds. Ejection during a crash is the most common cause of death and injury. However, even if there is no crash and you are driving at a low speed, sudden swerving, stopping or bumpy roads can cause injury to passengers in the cargo bed.

In a collision, the sudden deceleration or other crash forces will launch the person out of the bed. Most of the time, no amount of "holding on" can prevent this (even at slower speeds). In some collisions, pick-up bed passengers thrown out this way have been subsequently run over by the vehicle -- or other vehicles.

IT HAPPENS JUST LIKE THIS . . .

- A man was working picking up caution cones from a roadway when he fell from the bed of the pickup he was riding in and struck his head on the pavement. The 38-year old man died the following day from the brain injury that he sustained.
- A 40-year old man was thrown from the bed of a pickup truck that was going about 20 mph down the highway while he was trying to hold down a king-sized mattress with his body weight. A gust of wind caught the mattress and the man and mattress were thrown out of the truck. The patient was hospitalized for two months and was discharged to a rehabilitation facility.
- A 14-year old boy was sitting on the upper edge of a pickup truck bed while his brother was driving. According to the police, the brother said he hit a "chug hole" in the road and the 14-year old fell out and died at the scene.
- An 18-year old was standing in the back of a moving pickup when the pickup turned. The man fell out and struck his head on the pavement.
- A 25-year old man was riding in the back of a pickup holding onto a refrigerator. The driver of the pickup tried to take a turn at 40 m.p.h. and the young man and the refrigerator were thrown from the vehicle. The refrigerator fell on the man and he died at the scene.