

New rules over vehicle rear-view visibility delayed once again

Posted: 6:12 p.m. Friday, July 5, 2013

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WASHINGTON — The completion of some potentially life-saving rules has been postponed.

Channel 2's Scott MacFarlane has learned the U.S. Transportation Department has pushed back new regulations requiring that cars be sold with rear-view visibility to prevent back-over deaths and injuries to 2015.

Autumn Danchanko, 2, was one of the more than 100 people killed in recent years after being accidentally backed over by a car or truck.

"I live that moment. You can't stop the flashback. You can't stop the replay. It plays back in your mind. And yes, it's very difficult to deal with," said Eric Danchanko, Autumn's father.

Congress passed a sweeping new law in 2008 ordering the Transportation Department to create new rules to direct car makers to improve the field of view behind new vehicles.

But the timetable has repeatedly slipped.

"Since the legislation was passed, 400 children have died from rear back-overs," said Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-Illinois.

And it has again. MacFarlane obtained a letter sent this week, written by the outgoing transportation secretary in one of his final acts in office, where he announced the new rules won't be ready to be put into place till January 2015.

The Transportation Department said it's completed dozens of tests, but needs to run many more before deciding what will be the best option for vehicles.

The auto industry is already installing cameras on many vehicles as standard equipment.

An industry spokeswoman is quoted as saying this should be a consumer decision. Multiple reports suggest the price of new cars would jump if new rear-view technology was made mandatory, perhaps by hundreds of dollars.

A safety rule that's been debated for years will now continue to be debated until at least 2015.

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