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## Overcorrecting and rollovers: From bad to worse

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Driving off the road is bad enough, but overcorrecting only makes it worse.

“Overcorrecting is often indicative of running off the road and overreacting by jerking the wheel to get the vehicle back on the roadway,” said Walt Beckman, Driving Directorate, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center. “It’s usually due to inattentiveness, fatigue, or failing to maintain contact with the road in a curve.”

Motorists who exit the roadway and then overcorrect create a loss of control event, which is a small but deadly component of the Army’s overall accident numbers.

According to data available from the USACRC for fiscal 2015, loss of control was cited as a cause in seven fatal accidents, with speed and improperly entering a curve contributing to most.

“Those loss of control accidents accounted for roughly 15 percent of the 46 PMV fatalities recorded in fiscal 2015,” Beckman explained. “Loss of control in almost all cases is associated with another causal factor such as speed. In contrast, 17 of those 46 accidents, or 37 percent, were solely attributed to indiscipline such as speed, failure to wear seat belts or alcohol use.”

Overcorrecting often leads to rollovers, which are the deadliest of vehicle crashes.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, rollovers comprise only a fraction of total accidents but cause a disproportionate number of fatalities. For example, of the 9 million vehicle accidents reported in the United States during 2010, 35 percent of fatalities occurred during rollovers, which represented only 2.1 percent of total accidents. Nearly 70 percent of those victims were not wearing seat belts.

Soldiers can best protect themselves from rollover events by following established rules of the road.

“It’s as easy as maintaining the speed limit, always wearing seat belts, never drinking and driving, eliminating distractions and slowing down when the weather deteriorates,” Beckman said. “Momentary lapses in judgment are usually what lead to the fatalities we see.”

For more information on driving safety, visit <https://safety.army.mil>.