

HIGHWAY LOSS DATA INSTITUTE

NEWS RELEASE

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CADILLAC ESCALADE AND MITSUBISHI LANCER EVOLUTION TOP THE LIST OF HIGHEST INSURANCE CLAIMS FOR THEFT

ARLINGTON, VA — Versions of the 2003-05 Cadillac Escalade, Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution, and Dodge Ram 1500 quad cab pickup have the highest rates of insurance theft claims. The 3 vehicles have claim rates 4 to 5 times the average for all vehicles. These are the latest theft loss results for passenger vehicles 1 to 3 years old published by the Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDI), an affiliate of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

Overall losses for pickups have increased sharply since 1999. This is mainly because of high theft claims for the Dodge Ram and Ford F-250/350. In contrast,

INSURANCE THEFT LOSSES, 2003-05 PASSENGER VEHICLES

	Vehicle size/type	Claim freq.	Avg. loss payment per claim	Avg. payment per insured vehicle year
HIGHEST LOSSES				
Cadillac Escalade	Large luxury SUV	13.2	\$17,913	\$236
Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution 4WD	Small 4-door car	11.9	\$10,326	\$123
Dodge Ram 1500 quad cab	Large pickup truck	11.1	\$10,088	\$112
Ford F-250/350 supercrew 4WD (2005s only)	Very large pickup truck	8.9	\$17,702	\$158
Chrysler Sebring (2004-05s)	Midsize 4-door car	8.5	\$5,077	\$43
LOWEST LOSSES				
Ford Taurus	Large station wagon	0.3	\$3,872	\$1
Pontiac Vibe 4WD	Small station wagon	0.4	\$3,872	\$1
Buick LeSabre	Large 4-door car	0.5	\$4,905	\$2
Buick Park Avenue	Large luxury car	0.5	\$3,270	\$2
Toyota Sienna 4WD (2004-05s)	Very large minivan	0.6	\$8,777	\$5
AVERAGE ALL CARS		2.6	\$8,605	\$22

Notes: Claim frequencies are per 1,000 insured vehicle years; results are for 2003-05 models unless otherwise noted

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losses for cars and SUVs increased slightly in 2003-04 but declined in 2005. The rate of theft of pickups in 2005 was nearly twice as high as for cars or SUVs.

This is the fourth year in a row that the Escalade has topped the list of vehicles most likely to have a theft claim. In fact, 4 versions of the Escalade (EXT, a specialty pickup, plus 2- and 4-wheel-drive versions of the short- and long-wheelbase Escalade SUVs) head the list of the worst overall insurance losses for theft among all passenger vehicles. The EXT has overall theft losses that are 16 times higher than the average.

"The overall results show the Escalade has not only the highest rate of claims but also very expensive claims when they are filed," says Kim Hazelbaker, HLDI senior vice president. "In fact, almost one-quarter of theft claims for the Escalade are for \$40,000 or more, indicating that thieves often are stealing the whole vehicles and not just their parts."

The Escalade's theft losses have been the highest in recent years even though this vehicle is equipped with a standard antitheft ignition immobilizer. An immobilizer is built into a vehicle's electronic ignition system. It's supposed to prevent the vehicle from being started without the proper key.

Cadillac redesigned the Escalade for 2007 and upgraded its antitheft system. It's too soon to know if the new model will have a lower theft rate than the previous ones.

The high-performance Lancer Evolution is new this year to the list of vehicles with the highest theft losses. Investigators say this model may be attracting the attention of thieves because its parts can be used to customize standard Lancers.

Geographic differences in theft losses across the United States: HLDI's findings show that vehicle models with high overall theft losses vary by geographic area. For example, the Dodge Stratus and its twins, Chrysler Sebring and Plymouth Breeze, have very high losses in and around Washington, DC. Losses also are high for the 2003

Nissan Maxima and for the Lexus RX 330 in areas in and around New York City. Results for the Maxima and Lexus are believed to be associated with their expensive Xenon headlights.

HLDI results are the only reported theft results based on the number of insured vehicles on the road. Information on theft losses published by the National Insurance Crime Bureau and CCC Information Services doesn't take into account how many of each vehicle are insured, so the most popular vehicles on the road tend to top these organizations' lists of most-stolen vehicles. In contrast, HLDI identifies vehicles with the worst theft losses by counting the number of claims by make and model relative to the number of each make and model insured, indicating which vehicles are most likely to be targets.

Long-term trends: Overall theft losses, stated as average loss payments per insured vehicle year, reflect both how often theft claims are filed for a particular vehicle and the cost of the claims. Since 1980 theft claim frequencies have declined while average insurance payments per theft claim have increased. However, these trends have leveled off in recent years. The result is that since the mid-1990s overall theft losses have declined by about 25 percent.

**End of 3-page news release on insurance theft results
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