Stricter child seat testing in the cards

Canada will have some of the world's strictest testing on child car seats. Transport Minister John Baird has introduced crucial amendments, which will make Canada's testing standards world-leading. **CANADIANDRIVER.COM**

An angel to watch over your brakes

Volvo engineer reveals secrets of City Safety

JIL MCINTOSH
for Metro Canada

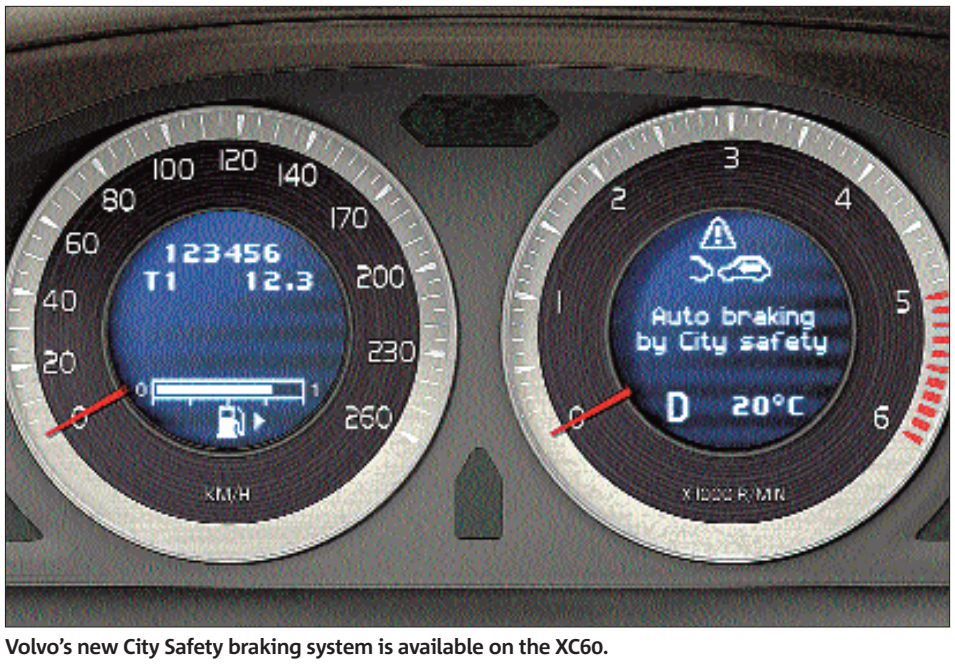
Drivers fear major collisions, but the reality is that more than 75 per cent are low-speed "fender-benders," according to Volvo — and although they're minor, they can still cause injury. It's the reason the company has introduced City Safety, a standard feature on the 2010 XC60.

The system, which works up to 30 km/h, uses a laser sensor to detect vehicles up to 10 metres in front. If you're not paying attention, the system first "pre-charges" the brakes for a faster stop. If you're still oblivious, City Safety jams on the brakes, either preventing the collision entirely, or reducing its severity. "Volvo has a long history of working with whiplash injury, and this is a next step," says Thomas Broberg, senior technical adviser for Volvo Car Corporation in Sweden, who helped create the system.

"The car will only act when it senses that there will be a collision and the driver is not taking any action to avoid it."
Thomas Broberg

Driving Force

"If you're not looking straight forward, which you aren't when you're distracted, a ten-kilometre crash if you're unprepared is quite significant. You're being thrown, your head is quite heavy, and your neck is weaker."



Volvo's new City Safety braking system is available on the XC60.

The system makes 50 calculations each second to determine how much braking force will be needed, based on how fast the Volvo is going, and how wide the gap is to the vehicle in front. If you do anything that indicates you're paying attention — if you hit the brakes, or move the steering wheel — the system instantly shuts down and lets you take over.

"The driver is always in control and responsible," Broberg says. "The car will only act when it senses that there will be a collision and the driver is not taking any action to avoid it.

"When we design these technologies, the difficult part is making sure the car doesn't brake when it's not supposed to. If your lane is slowly moving and the lane to the left is moving fast, and there's a gap coming up and you want to take it, you don't want the car to brake as you approach into the other lane."

Thomas Broberg helped create Volvo's new braking system, City Safety.

City Safety stops the car at the last possible moment, and jams the brakes on very hard. It's an unpleasant experience, and that's part of the design. "We have deliberately made it very late and very harsh because we do not want you to get accustomed to the technology," Broberg says.

"It's an emergency system. We're not claiming that this will avoid all of these situations, but it will make a significant difference."

The New Class of World Class.

The 2010 Buick LaCrosse. Luxury and style. Inside and out. Plus the best coverage in Canada – 5 Year/160,000km powertrain component warranty including roadside assistance and courtesy transportation.^ And if you don't love it, our 60-Day Satisfaction Guarantee lets you bring it back.‡ Put us to the test against anyone. And may the best car win. Visit buick.gm.ca.

BUICK
MAY THE BEST CAR WIN.

Buick LaCrosse

^Restrictions apply, see your dealer for details. ‡Return between 60-90 days with less than 4,000 km. Vehicle usage fee and other restrictions apply. Take retail delivery by 11/30/09. ®Buick is a brand of General Motors of Canada, the Official Vehicle Partner of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. TMO 2009, VANOC. Used under License.