

Customized Vehicle Override Accident Reconstruction:

A traffic collision led to the brain damage of the impacted driver. A young college student was driving her Ford Mustang on a country road at or below the posted speed limit. She was struck on the left side by a pickup truck that failed to yield right of way. The impacting vehicle was a highly modified Dodge Ram that had a 5" lift kit, oversized tires, and a steel brush guard instead of a front bumper. It impacted the Ford Mustang at the hood, forward of the driver's door. The Dodge Ram's aftermarket steel brush guard was so high, it overrode the hood, went through the windshield, and its right corner came to rest above the student's steering wheel. The guard shredded the driver's airbag. The driver was belted, but collision forces drove her forward during impact, and her head struck the unyielding steel surface. She was brain damaged as a result of her head impact against the bumper, rather than the airbag. In this case, I reconstructed the accident to find the initial velocities and the paths of the vehicles. I also acted as liability expert, and opined that the combined acts of raising the vehicle with a 5" body lift kit, putting on oversized tires, and installing a steel brush bumper guard rendered this vehicle an immediate hazard to other drivers, and it was defective. I performed research on the extent and legality of lifted vehicles, analyzed the crash, wrote a report, and was deposed. The case resolved after my deposition.

