



## **Why purchase a wheelchair that complies with WC/19?**

There is some confusion about what makes a wheelchair compliant with the ANSI/RESNA transit safety standard WC/19. Many people mistakenly believe that you can simply add securement brackets to an existing wheelchair product. In fact, a wheelchair that meets the standard must have several specific features and pass several tests. Here are some of the reasons you might need a WC/19 compliant wheelchair:

### **1. Increased protection for wheelchair riders involved in vehicle crashes**

A WC/19-compliant wheelchair is strong enough to protect the wheelchair user in a wide range of crashes and vehicle maneuvers. To pass WC/19, a wheelchair must perform well in a crash test similar to the tests used to make sure vehicle seats and restraint systems are safe. In laboratory crash tests, a WC/19 wheelchair must not fracture, must provide a stable, supportive seat for the crash dummy, and must remain well secured to keep the wheelchair and rider in the vehicle.

### **2. Ease of use**

A WC/19-wheelchair is easier to secure in a vehicle because it has clearly marked securement points on the wheelchair frame where tiedowns can be attached. To comply with the standard, these points must be easily identifiable and accessible for one-handed use in less than 10 seconds for each strap. The standard prohibits wheelchair frames that require difficult routing of tiedown straps through the frame or that have sharp edges that could cut or degrade the tiedowns over time.

### **3. Improved stability in vehicle**

A WC/19 wheelchair has been checked for stability to improve safety during normal travel. Even if the vehicle is not involved in a crash, wheelchair riders can be hurt when a wheelchair tips over during vehicle turns or sudden stops. The WC/19 standard requires the manufacturer to measure and report the lateral stability of the loaded wheelchair when it is secured and tipped to 45 degrees.

### **4. More compatible with seat belts**

A WC/19 wheelchair has been tested to determine compatibility with vehicle safety belts. Many current wheelchair designs do not allow for good lap/shoulder belt fit. For example, armrests and trunk supports can route vehicle-anchored lap belts away from the strong pelvis and over the soft abdomen, potentially causing injury. WC/19 requires belt fit quality to be measured and reported (using an ABCD scale) in the presale literature. This can help consumers and clinicians select wheelchairs that are safer for travel.