

# Woman Trapped in Waymo by Catcallers Raises Safety Concerns

Published Oct 02, 2024 at 12:32 PM EDT Updated Oct 02, 2024 at 7:16 PM EDT

By [Marie Boran](#)

Technology Reporter

A San Francisco tech worker's weekend ride in a Waymo, a self-driving taxi service operated by [Google](#)'s former self-driving car division, turned unsettling when two men temporarily blocked the car and demanded her phone number. The tech worker, Amina, took to X (formerly [Twitter](#)) to [post](#) about the incident and include video footage of the encounter. She said: "Warning to women in SF. I love Waymo but this was scary. 2 men stopped in front of my car and demanded that I give my number. It left me stuck as the car was stalled in the street. Thankfully, it only lasted a few minutes..."

Amina V., who chose not to give a full name when contacted by the *San Francisco Standard*, was riding in the [Waymo driverless taxi](#) around 10 a.m. on Saturday when the incident occurred.

The fully autonomous, all-electric Jaguar I-PACE equipped with the company's fifth-generation autonomous driving system, stopped at a red light when a man in a red hoodie stepped in front of the vehicle, bringing it to a complete stop.

A second man joined him, and both attempted to engage with the woman through the car's windows, asking for her phone number. Feeling threatened, she filmed the latter part of the encounter, which lasted for several minutes before the men eventually dispersed.

The woman added: "Even if it allowed for the wheel to be taken over...I can't drive so it was frightening."

This incident has sparked a conversation on social media about the safety of [autonomous vehicles](#), particularly for women riding alone. One X user [said](#):

<https://www.newsweek.com/woman-trapped-waymo-catcallers-raises-safety-concerns-1962647>

"This is low key really creepy," while another [posted](#), "This is unacceptable. We need to figure out a control mechanism against this that can work in all geographies."

"The Waymo team was great and called me with the in car support. They also called me to follow up and all around good at solving this problem," said Amina V., adding, "I may still take them but will be careful taking it alone."

Amina, who said she has used Waymo at least 10 times since this past summer, shared her experience on social media to warn other women in San Francisco. In her posts, she described feeling frightened and helpless, particularly because of a nearby individual carrying a blowtorch.

A spokesperson for the company told the newspaper that such occurrences are "exceedingly rare" among the 100,000 weekly trips Waymo facilitates across San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Phoenix. They also highlighted the 24/7 access to Rider Support agents who offer real-time assistance and can contact law enforcement if necessary. *Newsweek* reached out to Waymo via email for comment.

Waymo is an autonomous vehicle technology company that originally started as Google's self-driving car project in 2009 before spinning off as an independent subsidiary under [Alphabet](#) Inc. in 2016. The company focuses on developing and deploying fully autonomous driving systems.

Waymo currently operates self-driving taxi services, known as Waymo One, in three cities: San Francisco, Phoenix, and Los Angeles. In 2025, it is set to expand to Austin and Atlanta. The company had also ventured into autonomous trucking with its Waymo Via division but paused this project in July 2023.