



Stoughton Trailers, LLC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Ron Jake

Stoughton Trailers

608.877.8601

rjake@stoughtontrailers.com

Kate Miller

Blue Edge Marketing Ltd.

847.858.6818

kmiller@blueedgemarketing.com

**Stoughton® Trailers New Rear Underride Guard Lauded
Important for Safety**

STOUGHTON, Wis. (February 28, 2017) — Stoughton® Trailers, a global leader in transportation equipment, stresses the safety aspect of its new Rear Underride Guard. The underride guard is designed to provide greater protection to the driving public in the event of an accident at the rear of the trailer.

On May 4, 2013, Marianne Karth was driving her full-size sedan when she was struck by a tractor-trailer, sending her car spinning backward into the rear of another tractor-trailer. The tractor-trailer's rear underride guard could not withstand the crash and detached from the trailer, allowing Ms. Karth's car to slide backward under the trailer. The trunk of the car went under the rear of the trailer at the outer edge, and the back of the trailer body entered the back seat of Ms. Karth's car – killing Marianne's 17-year-old daughter, AnnaLeah, instantly. Mary Lydia, her 13-year-old daughter, died a few days later from her critical injuries.

That tractor-trailer's rear underride guard met the 1998 Federal underride standards. In 2011, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) tested underride guards of eight major trailer manufacturers. All of the underride guards tested met the Federal standards but none of them were able to stop underride on the outer edges. Subsequent IIHS testing performed in March 2013 – just two months before the Karth's fatal crash – revealed that only one of the eight manufacturers had designed their guard to successfully prevent underride at the outer edges, known as a 30% offset crash.

Stoughton...The Difference is Quality

416 South Academy Street ■ P.O. Box 606 ■ Stoughton, Wisconsin 53589-0606
608/873-2500 ■ FAX: 608/873-2575

Once the IIHS findings were published, Marianne began advocating for safer tractor-trailers. She even filed her own petition for improved underride rulemaking that went to the Department of Transportation (DOT) on May 5, 2014. In addition, her husband, Jerry began writing letters to trailer manufacturers and truck fleets, asking them to voluntarily upgrade their standards. 2,205 people died in underride crashes in the ten-year period ending in 2014¹.

At the same time, Stoughton Trailers began developing an improved rear underride guard that would provide underride protection at the outer edges of the rear end of a trailer. Together with the IIHS and the Truck Safety Coalition, the Karth's helped organize an Underride Roundtable at the IIHS's Vehicle Research Center on May 5, 2016. The event drew nearly 100 participants, including Stoughton Trailers, which introduced its newly designed rear underride guard to the public through a successful crash test during the Roundtable event.

Stoughton's newly designed rear impact guard provides underride protection over the full width of the rear end of a trailer, without added weight to the trailer and at no additional cost to the customer. It is now a standard feature on all Stoughton dry van trailers.



Upon learning of Stoughton's decision to make this improved protection available on all of their new trailers, Marianne said, "Stoughton's cooperative efforts to improve the performance of its rear impact guard demonstrates a genuine commitment to safety. Stoughton is to be commended for taking a significant

leadership role in design and safety. In my opinion, many lives will be saved as a result of Stoughton's efforts."



¹ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, 2014

Stoughton...The Difference is Quality