VISION ZERO
ZERO CRASH DEATHS AND SERIOUS INJURIES

The Case for a Practical Application of Vision Zero to Side Underride Protection on Large Trucks

Part 2
February 2017
AnnaLeah & Mary for Truck Safety
This book is lovingly compiled
in memory of

AnnaLeah Karth (forever 17)
Mary Lydia Karth (forever 13)
Jessica Holman-Price (forever 21)
and
Roya Sadigh (forever 26)

Along with countless other loved ones

Precious ones,
your lives were cut far too short
Side Guard Petition Book
Part 2

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Letters from a bereaved dad to the trucking industry

January 2014 – February 2017
An unexpected phone call from a trailer buyer with good news on underride guards

February 20, 2016

AnnaLeah and Mary, Safety Advocacy, Truck Safety

Marianne

Jerry was pleasantly surprised tonight by a phone call from Greer Woodruff, Vice President of Safety & Security at J.B. Hunt. J. B. Hunt Transport Services, Inc. is a trucking and transportation company that was founded by Johnnie Bryan Hunt, and based in the Northwest Arkansas city of Lowell.

Greer was calling to let Jerry know that Wabash National, a trailer manufacturer, had redesigned their rear underride guard to provide better protection at the outer edges of the guard. And he also wanted us to know that J.B. Hunt was the first to purchase the new trailers—having ordered 4,000 of them in January.

We had already heard about that yesterday morning. Thank you, Wabash, for creating a safer truck rear underride guard!

But then Greer went on to say that he had wanted to be sure and tell us about it and thank us for the letters, which Jerry wrote to J.B. Hunt—along with the major trailer manufacturers and many other trailer buyers, back in 2014 before we launched our first petition. Those letters, he said, had raised their awareness about the underride problem and spurred them on to talk to the trailer manufacturers about producing safer trailers.

That brought a smile to Jerry’s face.

We look forward to finding out more details about its design features and what level of protection it provides. Also, we hope to see additional attention given to side and front underride protection and retrofitting existing trailers as well.

Meanwhile, we are encouraged to see that progress is being made in moving toward the best possible protection with both voluntary and regulatory action. The Vision Zero Petition Book has arrived!

First set of letters which Jerry sent to trailer buyers in February 2014 (a variation of this went to trailer manufacturers):

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One of the letters which went out to trailer manufacturers in February 2014:

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A second set of letters went out in March 2014 to clarify our role/position:

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Another letter went out asking for support to our petition request for stronger underride guards:

And then Jerry sent a follow-up letter in the fall of 2014, including with it copies of the IIHS Status Reports which had articles on underride guards:

IIHS Status Reports with articles on underride guards, which we included with the letters to the trucking companies:

• This issue featured our story & petition to DOT: http://www.iihs.org/externaldata/srdata/docs/sr4907.pdf


Finally, after setting up our non-profit, AnnaLeah & Mary for Truck Safety, in the summer of 2015, we wrote to all of the truck companies again—asking for their help to voluntarily find safer underride guard designs:

Also, sometime after our letter writing, we were discussing our efforts with John Lannen at the Truck Safety Coalition. He asked for our list and said, “Thanks – I'll follow up with Greer since I know him well. What reaction did you get?”

In our efforts to not only improve regulatory federal standards on underride guards but, also, to catalyze voluntary industry improvement, we heard back from several other companies to whom we had written, including:

• UPS in Atlanta (Dan)

• CR England (Chad England)

• Extra Mile Transportation (Brent)

• J.B. Hunt (Greer Woodruff, Lowell, AK)
• UPS (buys from Great Dane)

• FedEx

**For more details on the response we got from them, see:** Additional response from trucking industry to our request for voluntary action on underride problem.

Photo Album of Jerry and his girls: With Dad. . . Family Man Jerry prays for his children every morning (lifting them before their heavenly Father/Abba). He is proud of them, teases them, enjoys spending time with them, and treasures each of his special children.

Jerry shares our story at the Fall 2015 Sorrow to Strength conference in DC hosted by the Truck Safety Coalition:
February 17, 2014

John N. Roberts III, President, Director, & CEO
J. B. Hunt Transport Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 130
Lowell, AR 72745

Dear Mr. Roberts:

On May 4, 2013, Marianne Karth and the youngest three of her nine children, AnnaLeah, Caleb, and Mary, were driving in Georgia on their way to a family wedding and four college graduations in Texas. Their car was hit by a truck, spun around, and hit by the truck again so that the car was pushed backward and literally stuffed under the rear of another truck.

Mary and AnnaLeah were in the back seat. AnnaLeah, only a week from her eighteenth birthday, died instantly from mechanical asphyxia. Mary, 13, had gross facial trauma (multiple facial fractures) and a stroke and died four days later from the swelling in her brain. While Marianne and Caleb did survive, they, and the rest of the family, are utterly devastated by the loss of AnnaLeah and Mary.

The Karth family has since attempted to raise awareness about the truck safety standards that are currently in place. We want other families to never have to experience the type of loss that we did and, thus, we turn to you—a purchaser of semi-trailers. You are in a position to improve the safety of the nation’s highways by voluntarily purchasing only trailers that meet or exceed the current U. S. and Canadian standards for underride guards as demonstrated possible by Manac, Inc.

We have written to many trailer manufacturers requesting that they voluntarily increase the standards of the underride guards as Manac has done. To date, we have only received one reply—from Jason Backs, Vice President, of Travis Body & Trailer (whose trailers have tires close to the rear).

In response to our request that Manac, Inc., voluntarily publish their standards so that other manufacturers could learn from them, Charles Dutil, President, has stated to us that they do not have a patent on their design and that, “there is nothing to publish that is not already available in the IIHS report. Any trailer manufacturer could go look at one of our trailers and spend 20 minutes studying the design and taking photos,” and they could reproduce the Manac design.

Therefore, we are asking you, starting May 4, 2014, to purchase all new J. B. Hunt semi-trailers from companies which manufacture them with underride guards which meet or exceed the Manac standards—thereby, reducing the risk to those who travel the roads of our country, providing them with the best possible protection.

Sincerely,

Jerry Karth
January 18, 2014

Bob Wahlin, President
Stoughton Trailers, LLC
416 South Academy Street
Stoughton, Wisconsin 53589

Dear Mr. Wahlin:

On May 4, 2013, Marianne Karth and the youngest three of her nine children, AnnaLeah, Caleb, and Mary, were driving in Georgia on their way to a family wedding and four college graduations in Texas. Their car was hit by a truck, spun around, and hit by the truck again so that the car was pushed backward and literally stuffed under the rear of another truck.

Mary and AnnaLeah were in the back seat. AnnaLeah, only a week from her eighteenth birthday, died instantly from mechanical asphyxia. Mary, 13, had gross facial trauma (multiple facial fractures) and a stroke and died four days later from the swelling in her brain. While Marianne and Caleb did survive, they, and the rest of the family, are utterly devastated by the loss of AnnaLeah and Mary.

The Karth family has since attempted to raise awareness about the truck safety standards that are currently in place. We want other families to never have to experience the type of loss that we did and, thus, we turn to you—a semi-trailer manufacturer.

You are in a position to voluntarily improve the standards of underride guards. Meeting and exceeding the current safety standards has already been proven possible by Manac, Inc. Manac's standards for underride guards exceed not only those in the U.S. but, also, the more stringent standards in Canada.

Trucks, and the trucking industry, are a necessary part of life as we know it, but that does not mean that we, as a country, should not try to make the trucking industry safer for everyone. By improving the safety standards on every new truck produced, more lives can be saved.

Therefore, we are asking you, starting May 4, 2014, to manufacture all new Stoughton semi-trailers with underride guards which would meet or exceed the Manac standards—thereby, reducing the risk to those who travel the roads of our country, providing them with the best possible protection.

Sincerely,

Jerry Karth
May 19, 2014

Robert E. Sanchez, CEO
Ryder System, Inc.
3600 NW 54th Street
Miami, Florida 33142

Dear Mr. Sanchez:

On May 4, 2013, Marianne Karth and the youngest three of her nine children, AnnaLeah, Caleb, and Mary, were driving in Georgia on their way to a family wedding and four college graduations in Texas. Their car was hit by a truck, spun around, and hit by the truck again so that the car was pushed backward and literally stuffed under the rear of another truck.

Mary and AnnaLeah were in the back seat. AnnaLeah, only a week from her eighteenth birthday, died instantly from mechanical asphyxia. Mary, 13, had gross facial trauma (multiple facial fractures) and a stroke and died four days later from the swelling in her brain. While Marianne and Caleb did survive, they, and the rest of the family, are utterly devastated by the loss of AnnaLeah and Mary.

The Karth family has since attempted to raise awareness about the truck safety standards that are currently in place. We want other families to never have to experience the type of loss that we did and, thus, we turn to you—a purchaser of semi-trailers. You are in a position, as CEO of a company which manages more than 210,000 vehicles, to improve the safety of the nation's highways by voluntarily purchasing and leasing only trailers that meet or exceed the current U. S. and Canadian standards for underride guards as demonstrated possible by Manac, Inc.

We have written to many trailer manufacturers requesting that they voluntarily increase the standards of the underride guards as Manac has done. We have received several responses including one company which has invited us to tour their Research & Design Center in June.

In response to our request that Manac, Inc., voluntarily publish their standards so that other manufacturers could learn from them, Charles Dutil, President, has stated to us that they do not have a patent on their design and that, “there is nothing to publish that is not already available in the IIHS report. Any trailer manufacturer could go look at one of our trailers and spend 20 minutes studying the design and taking photos,” and they could reproduce the Manac design.

Therefore, we are asking you to begin purchasing all new Ryder semi-trailers from companies which manufacture them with underride guards which meet or exceed the Manac standards—thereby, reducing the risk to those who travel the roads of our country, providing them with the best possible protection.

Sincerely,

Jerry Karth
May 30, 2016

Greg Carpenter, Vice President of Operations
KLLM Transport Services
135 Riverview Drive
Richland, MS 39218

Dear Mr. Carpenter,

On May 4, 2013, my wife, Marianne Karth, and the youngest three of our nine children, AnnaLeah, Caleb, and Mary, were driving in Georgia on their way to a family wedding and four college graduations in Texas. Their Crown Vic was hit by a truck, spun around, and hit by the truck again so that the car was pushed backward under the rear of another truck.

Mary and AnnaLeah were in the back seat. AnnaLeah, only a week from her eighteenth birthday, died instantly from mechanical asphyxia. Mary (13) had multiple facial fractures, several strokes, and died four days later from the swelling in her brain. While Marianne and Caleb did survive, they, and the rest of our family, are utterly devastated by the loss of AnnaLeah and Mary.

After learning that the underride guard on the back of the truck failed to prevent underride, our family has since attempted to raise awareness about the weak and ineffective underride standards that are currently in place. This included the Underride Roundtable that was recently held at the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's Vehicle Research Center in Ruckersville, Virginia, on May 5, 2016.

It is, in fact, technically feasible to improve underride guards. Students from Virginia Tech presented their underride research at the Roundtable after having spent their senior year developing an innovative prototype underride guard.

Additionally, we have been told that letters which we sent in early 2014 to the major trailer manufacturers, as well as to transport companies, have spurred four of the eight—Wabash, Vanguard, Manac, and Stoughton—to design new underride guards. These guards have been crash tested by IIHS and shown to surpass the present U.S. and Canadian standards.

I would encourage you to find out if KLLM is using trailers from a trailer manufacturer—including Hyundai, Strick, Great Dane, and Utility—which has not yet stepped up to the new de facto standards that are now in existence for underride guards. If so, this would leave your company in the position of having a liability loss exposure.

I am writing to encourage you to consider replacing your fleet of trailers with ones which would provide the best underride protection possible.

Sincerely,

Jerry Karth
February 16, 2017

Dear CEO

You may have already heard about recent efforts to improve the underride guards at the back of trailers. We are contacting you now about another matter: underride protection on the sides of trailers.

On May 4, 2013, Marianne Karth, and the youngest three of her nine children, AnnaLeah, Caleb and Mary, were driving in Georgia on their way to a family wedding and four college graduations in Texas. Their Crown Vic was hit by a truck, spun around, and hit by the truck again so that the car was pushed backward under the rear of another truck. AnnaLeah (17) and Mary (13) did not survive.

The Karth family has since attempted to raise awareness about truck safety standards. This includes the Underide Roundtable that was held at the IIHS Vehicle Research Center on May 5, 2016.

We have been told that the initial correspondence – which we sent, in early 2014, to the major trailer manufacturers, as well as to transport companies – has spurred five of the eight major trailer manufacturers to design new underride guards which surpass the present U.S. and Canadian standards. A sixth, Manac, had already improved their guard a short time before our fatal underride crash. We have been told that the remaining two are working on a stronger rear guard.

Now we want to bring to your attention to preventable truck side underride tragedies. As far back as 1969, DOT intended to extend underride protection to the sides of large trucks. In fact, NHTSA has reported 1534 side underride fatalities during 1994-2014 and 1715 rear underride fatalities but has not taken any action to mandate side underride protection. Clearly, this problem needs to be addressed if we truly value saving lives – like Lois Durso's daughter, Roya Sadigh, who tragically died 12 years ago due to a side underride crash.

In fact, we are aware of two side underride protective devices, AngelWing and TrailerGuard System, which have been recently developed and tested. We want you to be aware of these solutions which are to your best interest in many ways. Benefits to your company include the fuel savings from these aerodynamic side guards, as well as protecting you from any potential liability should someone die from collision with the sides of your trailers – not to mention the prevention of such tragedies happening.

We are looking forward to the discussion of this topic at the Second Underride Roundtable on August 29, 2017. A crash test into a side guard on a trailer will be included on the agenda.

We would like your help in promoting the further research and development of a solution to this decades-long deadly problem. We would, therefore request that you review the enclosed letter of support for this industry direction, which would send the message, to the Truck Trailer Manufacturers Association and its member trailer manufacturer companies, that you want effective side underride protection added to the trailers which you purchase.
Please let us know if you have any questions and whether you would be willing to sign such a letter.

Sincerely,

Jerry Karth

Marianne Karth

Isaac Karth

Lois Durso

NOTE: NOT YET SENT as of March 6, 2017
February 16, 2017

Dear Mr. Sims:

You may have already heard about recent efforts to improve the underride guards at the back of trailers. We are contacting you now about another matter: underride protection on the sides of trailers.

On May 4, 2013, Marianne Karth, and the youngest three of her nine children, AnnaLeah, Caleb and Mary, were driving in Georgia on their way to a family wedding and four college graduations in Texas. Their Crown Vic was hit by a truck, spun around, and hit by the truck again so that the car was pushed backward under the rear of another truck. AnnaLeah (17) and Mary (13) did not survive.

The Karth family has since attempted to raise awareness about truck safety standards. This includes the Underide Roundtable that was held at the IIHS Vehicle Research Center on May 5, 2016.

The Karths also sent letters, in early 2014, to the major trailer manufacturers, as well as to transport companies. These letters have spurred five of the eight major trailer manufacturers to design new underride guards which surpass the present U.S. and Canadian standards. A sixth, Manac, had already improved their guard a short time before our fatal underride crash. It is our understanding that the remaining two major manufacturers are working on a stronger rear guard.

Now we want to bring to your attention preventable truck side underride tragedies. As far back as 1969, DOT intended to extend underride protection to the sides of large trucks. In fact, NHTSA has reported 1534 side underride fatalities during 1994-2014 and 1715 rear underride fatalities but has not taken any action to mandate side underride protection. Clearly, this problem needs to be addressed if we truly value saving lives – like Lois Durso’s daughter, Roya Sadigh, who tragically died 12 years ago due to a side underride crash.

In fact, we are aware of two side underride protective devices, AngelWing and TrailerGuard System, which have been recently developed and tested. We want you to be aware of these solutions which are to the best interest of the trailer manufacturers in many ways. Benefits include the fuel savings from these aerodynamic side guards, as well as protecting you from any potential liability should someone die from collision with the sides of your trailers – not to mention the prevention of such tragedies happening.

We are looking forward to the discussion of this topic at the Second Underride Roundtable on August 29, 2017. A crash test into a side guard on a trailer will be included on the agenda.

We would like your help in continuing this process of side guard research and participation in the development of a solution for this decades-long deadly problem. We believe that, by working together, we can present your customers with cost-effective solutions to this safety problem.

Please let us know if you have any questions and your thoughts on how we might work together to
accomplish this.

Jerry Karth

Marianne Karth

Isaac Karth

Lois Durso

NOTE: Not yet sent as of March 6, 2017
annaleahmary.com
POSTS
on
the problem of
SIDE UNDERRIDE
and
SIDE GUARD SOLUTIONS
#Appendix M: Side Guards Posts from annaleahmary.com

See all Side Guards posts here: [annaleahmary.com/tag/sideguards/](http://annaleahmary.com/tag/side-guards/)

Chronologically archived:


15. To what lengths would you go to protect your loved ones? <http://annaleahmary.com/2017/01/to-what-lengths-would-you-go-to-protect-your-loved-ones/>


17. The Crash Death Clock is ticking; America will soon reach 4 million crash deaths. <http://annaleahmary.com/2016/12/the-crash-death-clock-is-ticking-america-will-soon-reach-4-million-crash-deaths/>


21. Truck Underride Tragedies Need to End; Enough is enough! <http://annaleahmary.com/2016/08/truck-underride-tragedies-need-to-end-enough-is-enough/>


24. A Very Mary Birthday: What Mary would have done & what I did without her on her birthday
25. New on the Market: Angel Wing Side Guard Solution To Prevent Truck Underride Deaths & Injuries

26. Preventing deadly crashes doesn’t require Either crash avoidance Or underride guards but Both/And.

27. Will @SenJohnThune Hold Auto Safety Hearing on Tesla Fatal Crash Before the Nov. Elections?


29. Very cool Youtube video of Aaron Kiefer’s innovative side guard with specs, test drive & crash test video.

30. Crash reconstructionist (inventor of an innovative side guard) tallies side underride crashes he has seen

31. Could Tesla crash fatality have been prevented if trucks were required to have #sideguards?

32. Side Guard Crash Test #3: Successful Prevention of Truck Underride Once Again!

33. Somebody, please get me an audience with President Obama to respond to my Vision Zero Petition!

34. Just got home from the latest side guard crash test. Watch it here!

35. Do “at-fault” victims deserve Death Sentence? Underride issues deserve to be clarified.

36. March Historically a Momentous Month for Truck Underride Safety Advocacy; Beware the Ides of March!


41. Truck SIDE GUARDS: Let’s get the debate out in the open. Somebody’s life is depending on it. #VRU [http://annaleahmary.com/2016/02/truck-side-guards-lets-get-the-debate-out-in-the-open-somebodys-life-is-depending-on-it-vru/]


44. Innovative combined side & rear guard promises better underride protection [http://annaleahmary.com/2015/09/innovative-combined-side-rear-guard-promises-better-underride-protection/]


49. With amazing technology advances, why are we slow as a snail to solve traffic safety problems? [http://annaleahmary.com/2016/01/with-amazing-technology-advances-why-are-we-slow-as-a-snail-to-solve-traffic-safety-problems/]
See Part 3 of the Side Guard Petition Book for further information