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News Release

SafeGuard sells thousands of its FlexSeat® bus seat to progressive school districts

Westfield, IN – May 1, 2009 – SafeGuard FlexSeat®, introduced by SafeGuard in October 2007, is being aggressively adopted by large school districts across the U.S., in advance of seat belt legislation. School boards, including Dallas County, Texas and Loudoun County, Virginia, are driving bus upgrades to increase student safety.

The SafeGuard FlexSeat safely transports three elementary size school children or two high school size kids on a standard 39-inch bus seat. With three lap-shoulder belts, the seat resolves capacity issues while still maintaining full compartmentalization.

SafeGuard Sales Director James Johnson notes the company is enthusiastic to see the acceptance of FlexSeat in the marketplace. “The fact that we’ve sold thousands of SafeGuard FlexSeats in the first year and a half of production demonstrates not only our capability to engineer and produce belted seats, but also that the industry is embracing our flexible seating solution.”

SafeGuard was the first to bring lap-shoulder belts to market on school bus seats in 2002 and the first to introduce a flexible seating solution that totally eliminates capacity concerns. SafeGuard bus seats are now protecting over 200,000 children in more than 40 states.

Dallas, Texas

Last spring, the Dallas County School Board made the decision to outfit all new school buses with belted seats before Texas seat belt legislation takes effect. The school system has made a commitment to continue equipping its fleet until every student on its 1,650 buses is transported in a belted seat. As president of the Dallas County Board of Trustees, Larry Duncan led the effort to equip buses with lap-shoulder belts, working collaboratively with school board leaders and members of top administration. “Safety of our children is the most important consideration. We take it seriously and have made an absolute commitment,” Duncan said.

Loudoun County, Virginia

In January of 2008, the school board in Loudoun County, Virginia, voted to require lap-shoulder belts on all new school buses purchased in the district. School Transportation Director J. Michael Lunsford describes some of the motivations in adding belts. “We try to teach children to get buckled up whenever they get into a motor vehicle, and the only place they don’t do that is in the school bus,” he explained. “Repetition is really important to children. I’ve never gotten a call from a parent saying, ‘I’m happy you don’t have seat belts.’”

Johnson notes that flexible seating spawned a new seating category in NHTSA’s final ruling on school bus seating protection, as regulated by FMVSS 222. “The industry not only has design parameters and testing standards for belted seating, but also has an ongoing requirement for true compartmentalization, provided exclusively by SafeGuard through SmartFrame™,” he said.

For more information on the SafeGuard School Bus Seating line, visit safeguardseat.com, or call 877-447-2305.

About SafeGuard

SafeGuard, a division of IMMI, has been the leader in child passenger protection for more than 25 years and is the largest child seating safety products manufacturer in the world. Bus seats made by SafeGuard undergo the most rigorous testing in the school transportation industry. Engineers at SafeGuard utilize the company’s modern crash test facility to verify the performance of bus seating products, as well as support product development of its OEM customers in the school bus industry. Over the past decade, SafeGuard has conducted ten full barrier crash tests on school buses to gain a full understanding of student occupant protection. To support the development of the company’s bus seat products, SafeGuard has conducted more than 200 sled tests and 20 school bus rollover tests, as well as performed tests on thousands of components to assure performance and durability.

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