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Sunday, October 19, 2003

Local News

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Marion Steel promoting new SafeRoads product

By Staff Reports

MARION -- Motorists in Ohio may drive roads protected by a product of a Marion company if the state's review of the roadside cable barrier system is favorable.

SafeRoads, an affiliate of Marion Steel Co., is in the process of introducing both itself and the new product it has been developing for more than three years.

On Oct. 1, SafeRoads installed its system at the Marion Steel plant, demonstrating the high-tension system to 13 representatives of the Ohio Department of Transportation.

The state of Ohio is especially interested in cable barrier systems as a means of preventing deadly "cross-over" accidents - vehicles crossing the highway median into oncoming traffic. The systems are visually appealing and, according to ODOT, cost 75 percent less than traditional concrete median barriers.

SafeRoads invited ODOT officials to Marion to show how easily the system can be installed, and how it is anchored on both ends into uniquely designed end terminals that are approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

Essentially, the SafeRoads barrier system uses three metal cables, anchored on two ends and attached in the middle to Marion Steel signposts. The cables are pulled taut, and the tension "catches" and slows vehicles that strike it.

According to Steve Conway of



Bill Sinden

Ohio Department of Transportation representatives watch the installation of a roadside cable barrier at Marion Steel.



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Ohio Department of Transportation representatives watch the installation of a roadside cable barrier recently at Marion Steel. SafeRoads, an affiliate of the Marion Steel Company, is in the process of introducing both itself and the new high tension barrier system they have been

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SafeRoads, "The high-tension aspect is the new twist on an old idea that is generating a lot of interest."

Conway said the tension gives the barrier a low deflection rate, meaning a vehicle won't travel far past the point of contact. Cable barrier systems of the past were of the low-tension variety.

The ODOT officials represented several interests within the department - engineering, maintenance and technical. The state won't use any product until it has been reviewed and thoroughly tested, Conway said. SafeRoads has been testing this cable barrier system, including crashing cars and trucks into it, for the past three years and is ready to go to market.

The state has agreed to spend \$800,000 to install experimental cable barriers next year in particular areas of the medians of the southeast Interstate-270 outer belt and a stretch of Ohio 315 in Franklin County.

These portions of roadway have a large number of crossover crashes, Conway said. SafeRoads hopes the state will strongly consider its bid for these projects.

SafeRoads Inc. offers a full line of low-tension through high-tension cable barrier systems. SafeRoads is an affiliate of Marion Steel Co., a leader in roadside safety products for more than 20 years.

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