



Contact: Patrick Mason  
(312) 464-1984 x249  
[pmason@clearblue.biz](mailto:pmason@clearblue.biz)

**MASTER LOCK UNVEILS “TOWING TROUBLES” WEBSITE;  
RESOURCE AIMS TO HELP EDUCATE PUBLIC ABOUT SAFE TOWING TECHNIQUES**

*Study Reveals Most Trailer Owners are Ill-Informed, While Accidents Continue to Rise*

**MILWAUKEE (September 7, 2006)** – Master Lock announced today that it has revealed a new website, [www.TowingTroubles.com](http://www.TowingTroubles.com), which seeks to educate motorists about the proper towing tips and techniques that will help keep them and their recreational trailers safe on America’s highways this year.

The “Towing Troubles” moniker refers to the names of two yearly studies that Master Lock has conducted on the towing habits of the general consumer. Research from these reports indicates that nearly 75 percent of American trailer owners admit to being less than knowledgeable about proper towing practices and safety.

And, while the nationwide sales of boats, RVs and campers are on the rise, so are the number of accidents involving passenger vehicles that tow trailers – 65,000 in 2004, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Association, a nearly 20 percent increase from 2003.

“The information we learned from the Towing Troubles studies paints an alarming picture of the state of America’s roads,” said Jim Recknagel, general manager of Master Lock’s Automotive Group. “But the good news is that there are several relatively simple things that Master Lock recommends the average recreational trailer user do to help keep themselves and their equipment safe.”

The website stresses tips like, “Inspect tires for wear and tear, and check the tire pressure on the tow vehicle and trailer – 40 percent of trailer accidents are a result of faulty or under-inflated tires.” And a separate section of the website highlights Master Lock towing innovations, products that offer consumers unique time and effort saving functions like Master Lock’s integrated Locking Ball Mount system, which eliminates the need for separate pins, clips and locks to secure a ball mount to your vehicle.

To help promote awareness of its Towing and Cargo Security products as innovative solutions for towing safely and securely, Master Lock recently announced a partnership with NASCAR NEXTEL Cup Series driver Jeremy Mayfield.

The partnership kicked-off prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday weekend, as Mayfield conducted a series of more than 20 television and radio interviews from a campground just outside of the Daytona International Speedway, in advance of the weekend’s NASCAR activities.

Mayfield discussed the results of Master Lock’s 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Towing Troubles national survey of trailer safety issues, and he introduced several of the unique Master Lock products that offer solutions to common towing safety problems.

**-more-**

**Page Two / Master Lock's [www.TowingTroubles.com](http://www.TowingTroubles.com) Announcement**

Master Lock also plans to feature Mayfield as a spokesperson in an upcoming "Safe Towing Techniques" DVD that will be given away to trailer owners in boating, camping and outdoor enthusiast organizations.

Finally, consumers will soon find Mayfield's name and likeness on the Master Lock website, [www.MasterLock.com](http://www.MasterLock.com), with extra information on towing issues and Master Lock towing security and cargo security products.

---

**About Master Lock**

Master Lock is the world's largest manufacturer of padlocks and related security products for automotive and outdoor needs, home and yard, contractors, campus, power sports and bike needs.

Master Lock Company LLC is an operating unit of Fortune Brands, Inc., a leading consumer brands company with annual sales exceeding \$8 billion. Headquartered in Deerfield, Ill., Fortune Brands (NYSE: FO) is included in the S&P 500 Index.

###