

KARL PRATT, INVENTOR/FOUNDER SAFETY SENTRY INC.

Karl Pratt, founder of Safety Sentry Inc., is the inventor of the Safety Sentry trailer hitch lock, a ground-breaking product that is guaranteed to prevent trailers from coming loose while driving and from being stolen while parked.

Astonishingly, since 1975, over 15,000 people have died on America's roads in accidents caused by trailers separating from passenger cars.

His company Safety Sentry Inc., manufactures and distributes a line of hitch lock safety devices that prevent utility trailers *of all kinds* – including horse trailers, boat trailers, camping trailers, RV trailers, cargo trailers and more – from becoming disengaged from the towing vehicle. Safety Sentry is unmatched in the marketplace in that *it works even if the coupler fails or becomes unlatched*, by enclosing the coupler and keeping it firmly seated on the ball. To prevent theft while the vehicle and trailer are left unattended, a locking device is also included. The products work in conjunction with safety chains.

In addition to preventing uncoupling while in transit or parked, Safety Sentry products require absolutely no modifications to trailers, and will work on all standard trailer hitches by clasping the hitch to the existing ball.

TRAILER SAFETY

While boating one day at Lewisville Lake in 1994, just north of Dallas, Karl Pratt prepared to back up his pickup and trailer for loading but was shocked to find his custom-built trailer missing. As a result of this expensive and upsetting experience, Karl decided to design a trailer lock that would prevent this kind of theft from happening again. With his significant experience in metal, machining and applications, he built a few theft deterrent trailer lock devices that also provided safety while in transport, gave them away to friends and associates, but that was as far as it went.

In January 2009, after stumbling upon the website www.dangeroustrailers.org that focuses on the prevalence of trailer accidents and the need for better safety laws, he became aware of the shocking loss of life and property that occurs when trailers become detached on the road. Karl was inspired to update the design of what he now calls the “Safety Sentry”. He had four objectives:

- ⌚ Design a device that would avert the separation of trailer and vehicle while driving
- ⌚ Make sure that the device would also stop the theft of the trailer while parked
- ⌚ Create something that would not require any costly modifications to existing trailer hitches or bumpers
- ⌚ Make it affordable for typical working folks

Karl carefully researched the facts about loose trailer accidents, including the astounding number of injuries and deaths of innocent victims, and the incidence of reported trailer thefts. Using this data largely from dangeroustrailers.org, he built the current safety trailer hitch lock prototype in his garage (in true Steve Jobs/Apple Computer fashion) and applied for a patent that is now

KARL PRATT, INVENTOR/FOUNDER SAFETY SENTRY INC.

pending. He's been building his business ever since with an aim to prevent unnecessary loss of life and property.

Karl was enormously impressed with the Herculean efforts of the website's owner Ron Melancon to effect changes in trailer safety legislation. Melancon the advocate clearly believed what Karl the inventor knew to be true -- that the catastrophic loss of lives due to runaway trailer accidents was largely preventable. Karl had the product to prove it and contacted Ron about a united effort to help save lives. Together they worked with State Senator John C. Watkins in Ron's home state of Virginia on a bill to create stronger trailer safety regulations. The result: On April 11, 2010 Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell signed a new trailer safety law into action that becomes effective July 1, requiring that all trailers must "be provided with a locking device that prevents accidental separation of the vehicles."

The Safety Sentry products fully comply with the new Virginia law, preventing disengagement, and in addition deterring theft. "If Safety Sentry provides peace of mind for people and prevents just one accident we feel we have done our part," says Karl.

THE BUSINESS

Karl manages and grows the company with Safety Sentry president Gwendolyn Cannon, who is also the "love of his life." In just a few weeks after Safety Sentry's startup, they expanded marketing to a nationwide audience, utilizing the Safety Sentry website which pulls in viewers from across the country and overseas, and have now built a distributor network in 34 states coast to coast. All Safety Sentry products are proudly made in the USA. In July, Karl and Gwen plan to roll out a new line of Safety Sentry locking systems for Gooseneck trailers.

"I have what I consider the best of both worlds," says Karl. "I want to help people and make a difference in their lives. That's why I invented Safety Sentry and that's why I joined forces with Ron's work. I consider it fortunate to be in this position where what I do for a living has meaning and purpose for others."

Karl and Gwendolyn Cannon live together on a ranch in Granbury, Texas just outside of Dallas-Ft. Worth.