DANGEROUS GUARDRAILS?

Lawsuit Questions the Safety of Guardrails

A whistleblower lawsuit claims that tens of thousands of guardrails installed across the US may be unsafe. The concern is that the specific design of the guardrail in question, the ET-Plus guardrails, can jam when hit and puncture cars, potentially causing injury, rather than curling away as intended.

The primary concern about guardrail safety is centered on a design change made in 2005. The size of the energy-absorbing end terminal was changed from five inches to four. The modification was apparently made as a cost-saving measure. Initial reports are that the new design passed all required testing. However, the lawsuit alleges that federal authorities were never alerted to the design change so it never received the required review and approval.

The final step in the Cause Mapping process is to develop and implement solutions to reduce the risk of a problem recurring. In this example, the investigation is still ongoing so the discussion of solutions is premature. Once the details of the issue are known, the Cause Map can be used to brainstorm solutions and document which solutions are selected to be implemented.