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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **SERTA MAKES SAFER MATTRESSES FOR CONSUMERS – Only Major Company To Make All Its Bedding Open-Flame Resistant Runs Consumer Advisory Notice in *USA Today***

**Hoffman Estates, Illinois (January 21, 2005)** Serta formally announced today that all its new mattresses will give consumers a critical measure of safety in case of a bedroom fire with its open-flame resistance FireBlocker® system. Serta is the first and only major brand to make all of its bedding open-flame resistant in the U.S.

The company began its rollout of FireBlocker mattresses in December 2003, more than one year before a regulation mandating open-flame resistance went into effect in California on January 1, 2005.



To honor its commitment to consumer safety, Serta placed a full page ad in a prominent position in the first section of *USA Today's* January 21<sup>st</sup> issue. The ad carries a powerful “Consumer Advisory” headline superimposed over a picture of Serta’s popular Counting Sheep icon. The message reads, in part, “More than 700 people in the United States die in bedroom fires each year. Effective January 21, 2005, Serta became the only major mattress manufacturer to include open flame retardant materials in the production of all Serta bedding nationwide.”

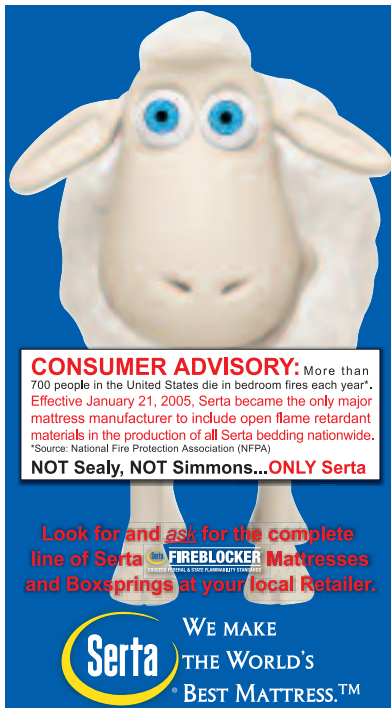
The ad then emphasizes the difference between Serta and its competitors, “Not Sealy, not Simmons...only Serta.”

“By the end of last year most Serta’s retailers carried FireBlocker lines,” said Robert Sherman, president of Serta International. “Now the production process is complete.”

Serta’s FireBlocker® system works by isolating the impact of a fire on the mattress and slowing its spread. This provides someone with critical time to escape and call for help. Serta’s FireBlocker technology is a proprietary system of natural and synthetic fibers in the outer layers of the mattress and box spring, containing no harmful chemicals.



“We recognize that time is life in a bedroom fire, and that is the basis for Serta’s FireBlocker protection,” noted Sherman. “Serta’s safer mattresses can help save lives now, and that is important to us. If you consider that one or two people die in a bedroom fire every day, many of whom are children, we are not willing to wait until federal regulations are mandatory before offering safer mattresses to consumers. I hope that our actions encourage other companies to follow our lead. In the meantime, we are committed to giving consumers a safer bedroom environment now.”



Over the last four years, Serta has conducted performance tests for its FireBlocker technology at Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL), and the results are UL-confirmed. These tests simulate the impact of a comforter and pillow fire on a mattress, and were developed by the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) and the California Bureau of Home Furnishings. Serta FireBlocker mattresses pass the tests and meet the California standard, which is the most stringent in the country.

A bedding brand leader, Serta makes the best selling premium mattress, the Serta Perfect Sleeper®, the luxurious Perfect Night® collection, the new International Touch Memory Foam line, and the upscale Masterpiece® brand mattress. Serta also is the nation’s number one supplier of mattresses to hotels and motels, including Hilton Hotels, Bellagio Hotel, Wyndham Hotels, Quality Inns and Choice properties nationally.

Featured ad in *USA TODAY*®

Headquartered in Hoffman Estates, Illinois, Serta has 26 U.S. and four Canadian manufacturing plants. Serta also is distributed internationally in 57 other countries throughout the world. With its worldwide network, Serta is able to respond quickly to customers’ needs while still preserving strict control standards to ensure the highest quality products.