## NU-designed guardrail ready for highway use Crash tests demonstrate roadside device could save lives profits, he said.

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roadside, Pfeifer said. This terminal was created in the 1960s for heavy, old-model cars, he said.

Today's lighter cars, such as the over accident increases the risk of in one year. injury or death to passengers, he said.

But Dean Sicking, BEST principle investigator and assistant professor of mechanical engineering, said the new end terminals were put in place to save lives, not wreck them.

safety device to protect motorists, and then the safety device kills them," its guardrai Sicking said. "This is the worst thing Pfeifer said. that could happen.

has happened way too much."

BEST's newest version, which is now cially inflated, he said. ready for the market and ready to save lives, he said.

brands approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation's new 1998 safety standards. All new guardrail higher usage, all travelers should end pieces put in place after that benefit. time will be either BEST or two other products.

than the competition, so sales could lives," Sicking said. soon skyrocket, he said.

cellor for research at UNL, said BEST year in royalty income to the university.

Interstate Steel in Big Spring, Texas, will manufacture the termi- part of the center's innovative research nals, which will retail for about and even work with crash-testing. \$1,200 to \$1,500, Helmuth said. The university will get a percentage of help save a few lives.

There are about 700,000 of the which turns down on the ends into the turn-down terminals that will need to be replaced, Helmuth said. BEST's low cost will make it a prime choice, he said.

Pfeifer said if all turn-down termi-Ford Festiva, could flip end-over- nals were replaced with BEST, about end in a 62-mph accident. Any roll- 40 lives could be saved in Texas alone

> A Texas study done from 1991-94 found current terminals caused 45 deaths each year, he said. No more than four or five should have occurred if BEST were in place, Pfeifer said.

In spite of its proven life-saving ability, the full market potential of "You spend money to put in a BEST is unknown because states will have three different choices to replace its guardrail terminals after 1998,

But Sicking said BEST was en-"And with guardrail terminals this sured success on the market.

The costs of other terminals that So Sicking went to work on the met 1998 safety standards were artifi-

Sicking said he believed safety should be affordable. By bringing The terminal is one of three BEST to the market, prices could fall by 30 or 40 percent, he said. And if the low cost of BEST results in

"If they're used three times as much as they were in the past, we'll BEST has been priced much lower save three times as many people's

Saving lives and preventing inju-Don Helmuth, associate vice chan- ries is the No. 1 goal of the Midwest Roadside Safety Facility, he said. The could bring a potential \$1 million per facility employs faculty, staff and graduate students in research on highway design and safety.

Pfeifer said students could become

And just maybe, he said, they could

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