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EuroFOT Project: Technology Reduces Rear-End Impacts by up to 42 Percent

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TORRINGTON, CONN. (07/05/2012)(readMedia)-- Volvo has earned a reputation for building vehicles that keep their drivers safe in a crash, but the Swedish automaker has also been implementing safety technologies that help prevent accidents in the first place. Those solutions recently proved their effectiveness in the European Field Operational Test on Active Safety Systems (EuroFOT), which used in-car cameras and sensors to closely track the journeys of 263 test drivers piloting 100 Volvo XC70 and V70 models over the course of 18 months.

The most-telling portion of the EuroFOT project was the examination of adaptive cruise control and collision warning systems, which were found to reduce the risk of rear-end collisions by up to 42 percent. Three other safety technologies were examined in the test Volvos, including the blind spot information system, lane departure warning and driver alert control, which successfully alerted tired or distracted test drivers.

"Staying safe on the road starts with smart driving, but we all make mistakes, and the EuroFOT study shows that Volvo's active safety technologies are an effective backup," said Jeff Schmahl, general sales manager of Torrington, CT Volvo dealer Mitchell Volvo of the Litchfield Hills. "Whether they are keeping you alert after a late night at the office or maintaining space from a fast-braking vehicle up ahead, you will probably be very glad that you have those safety features after a close call."

Ninety-four percent of the EuroFOT test drivers reported feeling safer while using adaptive cruise control, which allows Volvos to maintain a preset gap between the vehicles in front of them. Meanwhile, 80 percent of participants thought that driving with the technology activated was more comfortable and convenient. When asked for their opinion on collision warning, which alerts drivers and prepares the brakes for a potential crash, 70 percent felt that the system improved safety.

Even with its positive results in the EuroFOT project, Volvo is showing no signs of slowing down its development of active safety technologies. A new test facility next to the automaker's proving grounds in western Sweden will soon allow Volvo to simulate busy city roads, multi-lane highways and crossroads while evaluating new active safety solutions. Owned and operated by the company Active Safety Test Area AB, which is itself owned by the Technical Research Institute of Sweden and the Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, the facility will operate under the brand name AstaZero when it becomes operational in 2014.

While technology developed at the new test facility could make driving safer than ever, American buyers don't have to wait to find a safe and secure ride. The Volvo XC70 crossover used in the EuroFOT project is readily available at Volvo dealerships. Beyond its recently researched safety features, the 2012 XC70 also comes standard with dynamic stability and traction control, as well as an intelligent driver information system that delays the relaying of potentially distracting information during critical driving situations. For those looking for added stability in the Snow Belt, the XC70 is also available with a Haldex all-wheel-drive system.

"The drivers out on the road are probably the biggest x factor when it comes to traffic safety, but the weather can be just as bad," added Schmahl. "The Volvo XC70 is built to get New Englanders wherever they need to be safely, no matter how crazy our weather gets."

About Mitchell Volvo of the Litchfield Hills:

A part of the Mitchell Auto Group that has served Connecticut drivers since 1922, Mitchell Volvo of the Litchfield Hills strives to make every Volvo sales and service experience a great one. Backed by the knowledge and experience of an unparalleled sales team, they help customers find the perfect new or certified pre-owned Volvo for their lifestyle. For prompt and reliable Volvo service with a broad selection of parts, visit Mitchell Volvo of the Litchfield Hills. Browse their inventory in person at 450 New Litchfield St. in Torrington, or online at www.volvolithfieldhills.com. They can also be contacted by phone at and found on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MitchellVolvoLitchfieldHills.

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