

Know the Law

For the past several years, Ohio's "Operation Lifesaver" program, part of a national highway-railroad grade crossing campaign, has been sponsoring "Officer on the Train" programs. An officer rides on a train locomotive and radios descriptions of vehicles that ignore warning devices to officers near the crossings who cite or arrest the violators.

It is illegal to cross tracks when a train is approaching and warning lights or audible signals are activated. You are also required to yield the right-of-way to an approaching train if the crossing warning device is a passive crossbuck. **The law also states that "no person shall drive any vehicle through, or under any crossing gate or barrier at a railroad crossing while the gate or barrier is closed or is being opened or closed" (ORC 4511.62).** Ohio law requires all vehicles to stop (no closer than 15 feet, but not more than 50 feet from the track) at highway/rail crossings when a train is approaching.

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Don't Let Life End Here
Trains Can't Yield



Don't be a Pop Can

Imagine that you're rushing to an emergency situation driving 60 m.p.h. Suddenly, an empty pop can appears and rolls in front of you. You brake to avoid it, but still crush the can beneath your tires. No harm is done to you or your vehicle, but the pop can is flatter than a pancake.

Now think about this: Your vehicle is a pop can if hit by a train. The weight ratios are the same. Even if the train engineer sees your vehicle and slows to five m.p.h., the force will still crush your vehicle and push it 40-50 yards down the track.

Look, Listen and Live

Whether you are an emergency medical technician, a law enforcement officer, a firefighter, or just on a leisurely drive, it is important to remember that you need to approach railroad crossings with extreme caution.



Trains CANNOT stop quickly.

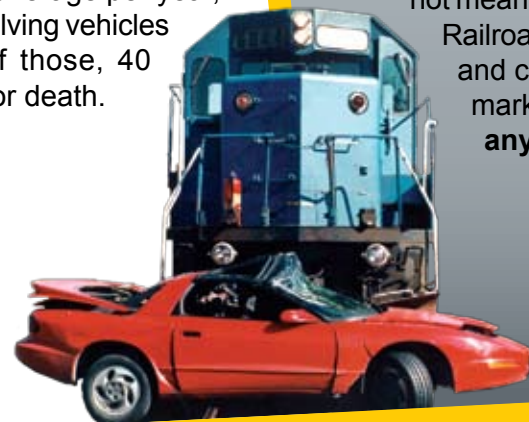


Know the Facts

Approximately every two hours, either a vehicle or a pedestrian is struck by a train in the United States. Ohio is ranked as one of the leading states in the nation for such tragedies.

Ohio has over 5,800 miles of active railroad tracks with 6,100 public grade crossings. Over half of these have train-activated gates or flashers.

Motorists are 40 times more likely to die in a crash involving a train than in a collision involving any other type of motor vehicle. On average per year, there are over 150 collisions involving vehicles or pedestrians with trains. Of those, 40 percent result in severe injury or death.



Don't Make These Common Mistakes

Remember, these common errors can cost you your life!

- A train approaching looks farther away than it actually is. A train one mile away would take less than a minute to cross your path.
- Don't try to out-race a train. When it's a tie at the crossing, YOU LOSE!
- Don't fail to observe the warning signs. About half of the vehicle/train collisions occur at crossings with active warning devices (gates, lights, bells).
- As a train clears a crossing, don't immediately start to cross the tracks without looking for other trains. You could be struck by another train running on an adjacent track.
- Even though you travel back and forth over the same tracks every day does not mean you should not use caution. Railroads operate around the clock and change schedules based on market conditions. **Remember, any time is train time!**

Average freight train stopping distance:

- 55 m.p.h. = one mile or more (18 football fields).

Eight-car passenger train stopping distance:

- 79 m.p.h. = one mile or more (18 football fields).