

Railroad Facts & Figures

- Train tracks are private property, no matter which railroad owns them.
- According to a report issued by the Department of Transportation's Inspector General, 94 percent of all grade crossing accidents are caused by risky driver behavior.
- It can take a train a full mile or more to brake even after it has hit something – nearly 18 football fields. Even if an engineer sees someone or something on the tracks, he or she cannot stop in time.
- It takes an average train 3-4 minutes to pass through a crossing.
- Railroad tracks, bridges, yards and equipment are private property. Walking or playing on them is illegal – trespassers can be arrested and fined.
- Some 400 people are injured and 500 killed annually while trespassing on railroad tracks.
- A typical train is 7,000 feet and weighs 3,200 tons.
- 64 percent of all collisions occur in daylight hours.
- Nearly half of all highway-rail crashes occur when the train is traveling under 30 mph.
- Three of four collisions occur within 25 miles of the driver's home.
- Approximately every two hours in the U.S., a collision occurs between a train and either a vehicle or a pedestrian – that is 12 incidents a day.
- You are 20 times more likely to die in a collision with a train than in a collision involving another motor vehicle.
- There are approximately 218,000 miles of railroad track in the U.S.
- Since 1994, almost 6,500 people have been killed while trespassing on railroad tracks and surrounding property.
- One in five people do not know the full meaning of the crossbuck sign (slow down, look, listen).
- More people die in highway-rail grade crossing crashes in the U.S. each year than in all commercial and general aviation crashes combined.
- Nationally nearly 50 percent of vehicle/train collisions occur at crossings with active warning devices (gates, lights, bells).
- Collisions and fatalities at highway/rail grade crossings have declined over the past 30 years by almost 75 percent. In 2006, the number of train/motor vehicle collisions was 2,834 vs. 3,010 in 2005. With nearly 150,000 public grade crossings in the U.S., improving grade crossing safety is an important challenge.