

# Backgrounder

## RAILWAY CROSSING FACTS AND TIPS

- There are approximately 55,000 public, private and pedestrian highway-railway crossings in Canada.
- There are still too many fatalities and injuries as a result of highway-railway crossing collisions.
- Approximately 50 per cent of vehicle-train collisions occur at crossings with active warning devices (gates, lights, bells).
- Trains cannot stop quickly. An average freight train travelling at 100 km/h requires about 1.1 kilometres to stop. A passenger train travelling at 120 km/h requires about 1.6 kilometres to stop. That's 14 football fields!
- Look for the crossbuck symbol that indicates a highway-railway crossing. Some more heavily travelled highway-railway crossings have lights and bells or gates.
- Listen for warning bells and whistles. Turn off, or turn down, distracting fans, heaters and radios until the crossing is safely cleared. Opening the window helps you hear better.
- Never drive around lowered gates — it's illegal and deadly. If you suspect a signal is malfunctioning, call the 1-800 number posted on or near the crossing signal or your local law enforcement agency.
- Never race a train to the crossing — even in a tie, you lose.
- Do not get trapped on the tracks. Proceed through a highway/railway crossing only if you are sure you can completely clear the crossing without stopping. Remember that the train is three feet wider than the tracks on both sides.
- If your vehicle stalls on the tracks at a crossing, immediately get everyone out and far away from the tracks. Move in the direction that the train is approaching from to avoid being hit by debris, because the momentum of the train will sweep your vehicle forward.
- When at a multiple-track crossing waiting for a train to pass, watch out for a second train on the other tracks, approaching from either direction.
- Railway tracks, trestles, yards and equipment are private property. Walking or playing on them is illegal, and trespassers are subject to arrest and fines. Too often the penalty is death.

- In 2008, 47 people were killed and 20 others seriously injured while trespassing on railway property.
- Do not walk, run, cycle or operate all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) on railway tracks or rights of way or through tunnels.
- Cross tracks only at designated pedestrian or railway crossings. Observe and obey all warning signs and signals.
- Do not attempt to hop aboard railway equipment at any time. A slip of the foot could cost you a limb or your life.

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