

Safety Factsheet

ABOUT OPERATION LIFESAVER & CTRAIL

Operation Lifesaver is a nonprofit public safety education and awareness organization dedicated to reducing collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail crossings and trespassing on or near railroad tracks. Since Operation Lifesaver's founding, train collisions with pedestrians and motorists have declined by 83% in the United States, from over 12,000 in 1972 to 2,087 in 2013. The efforts of Operation Lifesaver have been a major contributor to this decline.

CTrail, a service of the Connecticut Department of Transportation, includes Shore Line East and the new Hartford Line rail service. CTrail is partnering with Operation Lifesaver to increase awareness about rail safety for Connecticut's pedestrians, drivers, bicyclists, and rail passengers.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

- ▶ **Railroad property is private property.** For your safety, it is illegal to be there unless you are at a designated public crossing.
- ▶ **The only safe place** to cross is at a designated public crossing with either a crossbuck, flashing red lights or a gate. If you cross at any other place, you are trespassing and can be ticketed and fined.
- ▶ **Do not cross the tracks immediately after a train passes.** Your view of a second train might be blocked by the first.
- ▶ **It can take one mile or more to stop a train,** so a locomotive engineer who suddenly sees someone on the tracks may not have time to stop.
- ▶ **Turn off music and remove earphones at all rail crossings.** Music can be a deadly distraction near the tracks - preventing you from hearing an approaching train.

DRIVER SAFETY

- ▶ **The train you see is closer and faster-moving** than you think.
- ▶ **Trains and cars don't mix.** Never race a train to the crossing — even if you tie, you lose.
- ▶ **Stop when the lights begin flashing.** A train is approaching. Remain stopped until the gates go up and the lights stop flashing.
- ▶ **Never drive around lowered gates** — it's illegal and deadly. If you suspect a signal is malfunctioning, call the emergency number posted on or near the crossing signal or your local law enforcement agency.
- ▶ **Do not get trapped on the tracks;** proceed through a highway-rail grade crossing only if you are sure you can completely clear the crossing without stopping.
- ▶ **If your vehicle ever stalls on the tracks, get out and get away** from the tracks — even if you do not see a train. Locate the Emergency Notification System sign and call the number provided, telling them about the stalled vehicle.



**OPERATION
LIFESAVER®**
Rail Safety Education

Did You Know?

- ▶ **Trains cannot stop quickly.** Even if the locomotive engineer sees you, a train moving at 55 miles per hour can take a mile or more to stop once the emergency brakes are applied. That's 18 football fields!
- ▶ **Trains overhang the tracks** by at least three feet in both directions; loose straps hanging from rail cars may extend even further. If you are in the right-of-way next to the tracks, you can be hit by the train.
- ▶ **Any time is train time at highway-rail grade crossings.** Freight trains do not run on set schedules and can be anywhere at any time going in any direction. At all crossings, and especially those you are most familiar with, always expect a train.
- ▶ **Railroad tracks, trestles, yards and equipment are private property** and trespassers are subject to arrest and fine. If you are in a rail yard uninvited by a railroad official, you are trespassing and subject to criminal prosecution.
- ▶ **Two Tracks - Two Trains.** When at a crossing with more than one track, do not try to cross immediately after the end of the train passes by. There may be another train approaching on the other track. Many crossing accidents occur due to impatience or a lack of awareness at multiple-track crossings.

Additional Information:

For more safety tips, visit Operation Lifesaver at oli.org. You may also email Kevin.Burns@ct.gov for more information about free safety presentations, training, and volunteer opportunities in your area.

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THE HARTFORD LINE

The Connecticut Department of Transportation, in partnership with the Federal Transit Administration and Amtrak, has launched a new rail service called the Hartford Line. The Hartford Line provides frequent rail service between New Haven, Connecticut and Springfield, Massachusetts. The Hartford Line has been designed to the latest regulatory and industry safety standards, including:

- ▶ A new high-tech signal system called Positive Train Control (PTC) will be installed along the corridor by the end of 2018. PTC uses technology to automatically stop a train before certain types of accidents occur, including derailments caused by excessive speed and collisions between trains. It is important to note that PTC will **not** prevent collisions between trains and motor vehicles at grade crossings, nor between trains and pedestrians at **any** location.
- ▶ At-grade crossings along the corridor have been upgraded with new warning devices to improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.
- ▶ Train operators and crews will undergo extensive safety and operational training.



PASSENGER SAFETY

- ▶ **Stay Alert:** Trains can come from either direction at any time and can be very quiet.
- ▶ **Watch the overhang:** Trains are wider than the tracks; never sit on the edge of a station platform.
- ▶ **Keep away from the platform edge:** Pay attention to painted or raised markings at the platform edge, and stay at least three feet away from the train while it is coming in or out of the station.
- ▶ **When on board, hold on:** Hold on tight to poles or seats, and listen carefully to directions from the train operator or conductor.
- ▶ **Watch your step:** Be careful getting on and off the train - there may be a gap between the train and platform or steps.
- ▶ **Don't take shortcuts with your life:** Follow directional signs and markings that let you know where it is safe to cross the tracks. Crossing the tracks anywhere else is dangerous and illegal.

BICYCLIST SAFETY

- ▶ **Crossing over rail tracks on a bicycle requires caution and extra attention:** Narrow wheels can get caught between the rails. If possible, walk - don't ride - across. Always cross at a 90-degree angle to the tracks.
- ▶ **Use only designated rail crossings:** The only legal and safe place to cross railroad tracks is at a designated public crossing with a crossbuck, flashing red lights or a gate. Crossing at any other location is trespassing and illegal.
- ▶ **Turn off music and remove earphones at all rail crossings:** Music can be a deadly distraction near the tracks - preventing you from hearing an approaching train.
- ▶ **Wet train tracks can be slippery:** Dismount and walk your bike across the tracks. Step over the tracks - not on them - to avoid slipping.
- ▶ **Watch out for a second train:** Wait after the first train passes until you can see clearly in both directions.
- ▶ **If you see a train coming, wait!** Flashing lights or a lowering gate means a train is approaching. Do not proceed until the gates go completely up and the lights go off. It is illegal to go around lowered gates, whether on a bike, on foot or in a vehicle.

