

# Railroad Merit Badge - Safety





# OPERATION LIFESAVER





## OL Mission

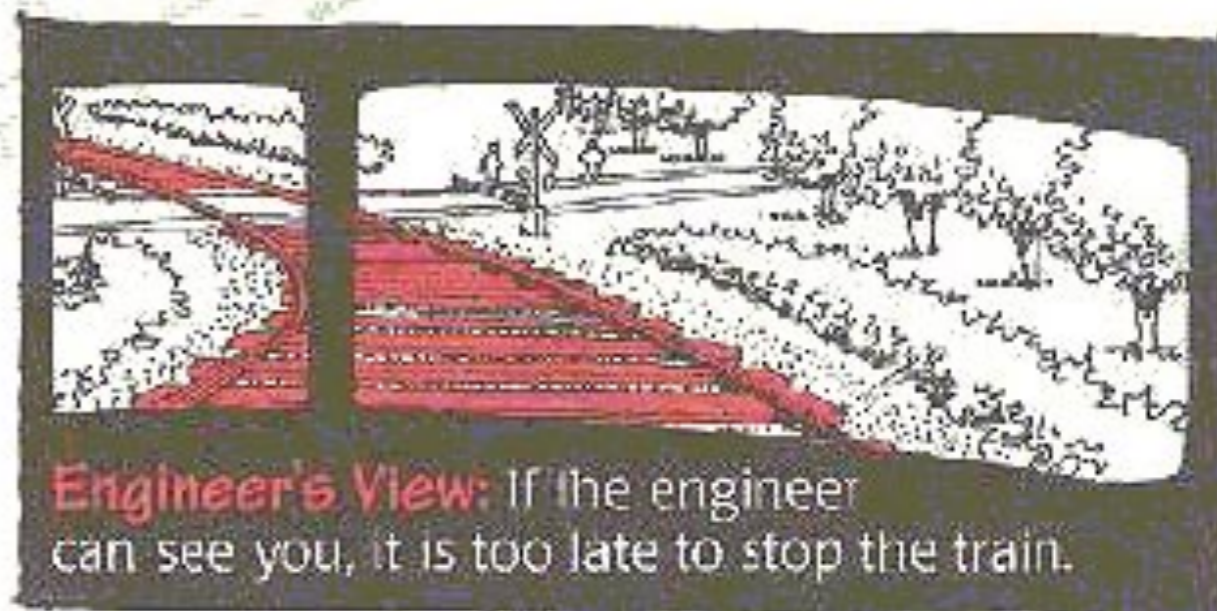
Operation Lifesaver is a national, non-profit education and awareness program dedicated to ending tragic collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and on railroad rights of way. To accomplish its mission, Operation Lifesaver promotes 3 Es:

- **Education**: Operation Lifesaver strives to increase public awareness about the dangers around the rails. The program seeks to educate both drivers and pedestrians to make safe decisions at crossings and around railroad tracks.
- **Enforcement**: Operation Lifesaver promotes active enforcement of traffic laws relating to crossing signs and signals and private property laws related to trespassing.
- **Engineering**: Operation Lifesaver encourages continued engineering research and innovation to improve the safety of railroad crossings.

# TRAIN RULES

## What's *NOT* safe?

-  Tracks are private property. Be safe – don't trespass.
-  Stay off railroad cars and tracks: it's against the law.
-  Don't play on railroad bridges.
-  Putting things on train tracks is dangerous.
-  It is not safe to walk between the cars of standing trains.
-  Throwing items at trains is not safe.
-  Stay out of railroad tunnels!



## What *IS* safe?

-  Watch for railroad signs and lights. 
-  Only cross at marked crossings. Walk bicycles across after looking both ways.
-  Listen for train whistles and bells.
-  If you are in a car stuck on the tracks, get out fast and move far away!

## **HIGHWAY-RAIL SAFETY: LOOK, LISTEN...LIVE!**

Operation Lifesaver urges everyday motorists and professional drivers to remember these tips:

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 if you tie, you lose.

Do not get trapped on the tracks. Only proceed through a highway-rail grade crossing if you are sure you can completely clear the crossing without stopping. Remember, the train is three feet wider than the tracks on both sides.

If your vehicle stalls on a crossing, immediately get everyone out and far away from the tracks. (Move away from the tracks in the direction from which the train is approaching.) Call your local law enforcement agency for assistance.

At a multiple track crossing waiting for a train to pass, watch out for a second train on the other tracks, approaching in either direction.

Be aware that trains cannot stop quickly. Even if the locomotive engineer sees you, a freight train moving at 55 miles per hour can take a mile or more to stop once the emergency brakes are applied. That is at least 18 football fields!

Do not be fooled by the optical illusion – the train you see is closer and faster moving than you think. If you see a train approaching, wait for it to go by before you proceed across the tracks.

**ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN!** Freight trains do not follow set schedules.



**TRESPASSING IS  
DANGEROUS  
AND ILLEGAL**



**STAY OFF  
RAILROAD TRACKS**

## **Stay Off !! Stay Away !! Stay Alive !!**

Operation Lifesaver urges pedestrians to remember the following track facts and tips:

Railroad tracks, trestles, yards and equipment are private property. Walking or playing on them is illegal – trespassers are subject to arrest and fines. Too often the penalty is death.

There are **200,000 miles** of railroad tracks in the United States.

Since 1990, more than **5,000 people** have been killed while trespassing on railroad rights-of-way and property.

Trains cannot stop quickly. A freight train moving at 55 miles per hour, or an 8-car passenger train moving at 79 miles per hour, can take a mile or more to stop.

**DO NOT** walk, run, cycle or operate all terrain vehicles (ATVs) on railroad tracks or rights-of-way or through tunnels.

Cross tracks **ONLY** at designated pedestrian or roadway crossings. Observe and obey all warning signs and signals.

**DO NOT** hunt, fish or bungee jump from railroad trestles. They are not designed to be sidewalks or pedestrian bridges – there is only enough clearance on the tracks for a train to pass.

**DO NOT** attempt to hop aboard railroad equipment at any time. A slip of the foot can cost you a limb, or your life.

**ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN!** Freight trains **DO NOT** follow set schedules.

**REMEMBER:** Rails and recreation **DO NOT** mix!







Pavement Markings











