



Florida Department of Transportation

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Florida Department of Transportation Highlights the Importance of Rail Safety *~ Rail Safety Week is September 18 – 24, 2023 ~*

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – This week, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) joins transportation partners throughout the state and country to recognize National Rail Safety Week and the importance of making safe decisions around trains and railroad tracks.

Ensuring safety around trains and tracks throughout Florida communities is a collective effort. FDOT additionally promotes safety with the Target Zero initiative, aimed at reducing serious injuries and fatalities on Florida’s transportation network to zero by identifying behaviors that contribute to tragic incidents. Behavioral change is a key component to reducing injuries and fatalities on Florida’s rail network.

The increasing rates of trespassing along a train’s right-of-way is illegal and the leading cause of all rail-related fatalities nationwide. In Florida, trespassing accounted for nearly 70 percent of rail fatalities in 2022, with 65 Floridians struck and killed in rail incidents and 203 more sustaining injuries. These staggering statistics reflect the importance of responsible decisions and safe behavior around trains and tracks.

“Too often, families and communities experience the heartbreak of losing a loved one in a preventable rail incident,” **said Florida Department of Transportation Secretary Jared W. Perdue, P.E.** “As FDOT actively works to reduce these tragedies through increased engineering countermeasures and education, all Floridians – whether driving, walking, or biking – must be safe and sensible around trains and tracks.”

In response to fatalities on Florida’s rail network in recent years, FDOT continues to use engineering tactics to bolster safety on intercity passenger, commuter, and freight rail systems. This includes the implementation of rail inspection programs that exceed industry standards, as well as increased physical indicators of a train at rail crossings.

The Department’s installation of “dynamic envelopes” at all existing rail crossings on FDOT roadways and state-owned land includes white connecting X-shaped markings to indicate the clearance needed for trains to safely pass through railroad crossings to keep motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrian out of the danger zone. To promote awareness, FDOT

additionally established Operation S.T.R.I.D.E – Statewide Traffic and Railroad Initiative using Dynamic Envelopes – in 2019 to further combat rail-related fatalities through education, enforcement efforts, and engineering countermeasures. Dynamic envelopes have reduced the number of vehicles that stop on or too close to railroad tracks by at least 15 percent.

For rail safety tips, please remember these basic rail safety practices while operating a vehicle, walking, or bicycling near trains or tracks:

- Only cross at designated rail crossings and ensure the ability to clear it safely
- Do not trespass on or near tracks, including driving, walking along, or taking photos
- Refrain from headphones, cellular phones, or distractions in the vicinity of tracks
- Walk a bicycle across railroad tracks if possible or cross at a 90-degree angle
- Never stop a vehicle on tracks or attempt to drive around lowered gates

FDOT's mission is to provide a safe and efficient transportation system that ensures the mobility of people and goods, enhances economic prosperity, and preserves the quality of the state's environment and communities. Together with communities and partners, FDOT strives to ensure Floridians are proud that the Sunshine State is the best place to live, learn, work, and play, and that residents and visitors alike are offered the best transportation system and a variety of travel options. For more information, visit [FDOT.gov](https://www.fl.gov).

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