

# State of Illinois Proclaims September 21-27, 2020 as “Rail Safety Week”

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Chicago, IL – Governor JB Pritzker has declared September 21-27, 2020 as *Illinois Rail Safety Week*. This is the 7th year Illinois has set aside a week in September for a statewide awareness initiative to educate drivers and pedestrians about safety around railroad tracks and trains. In observation, and in place of in-person activities, the Illinois Commerce Commission is pleased to share rail safety facts, tips and virtual lesson plans, and resources from Operation Lifesaver. Highlighted on the ICC website and social media platforms are recent publications and materials for teachers, students, the trucking industry, and the agricultural community.

During 2019, 104 vehicle crashes were reported at public highway-rail grade crossings, resulting in 19 fatalities and 26 personal injuries in Illinois. In addition, 49 pedestrians

trespassing on railroad property rights-of-way were struck by passing trains, resulting in 29 fatalities and 20 personal injuries. Illinois ranks fourth in the nation in trespass facilities and grade crossing fatalities in 2019. More than 81 percent of crashes at public grade crossings in Illinois occur where active warning devices, such as flashing lights, ringing bells and/or gates exist.

“Tragically, lives are lost each year due to crashes involving trains – many of these accidents could have been prevented. Rail Safety Week is an opportunity for us to raise awareness about the dangers associated with highway-rail grade crossings and to remind motorists and pedestrians about laws and tips to stay safe,” said ICC Chairman Carrie K. Zalewski.

Illinois’ efforts are supported by the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (ILACP) partnered with Metra Railroad and supported by the American Automobile Association, Illinois Commerce Commission, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Operation Lifesaver, Illinois State Police, Illinois Tollway Authority, Illinois Sheriff’s Association, Illinois Secretary of State, Illinois Truck Enforcement Association, Illinois High School and College Driver’s Education Association, DuPage Rail Safety Council, local and railroad law enforcement, first responders and area railroad companies. All are committed to partnering together to educate residents on all aspects of railroad safety and to enforce applicable state laws.

The ICC will be sharing daily Rail Safety Facts and Tips @ILCommerceComm on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and at the Illinois Commerce Commission page on LinkedIn.

For more information about Illinois Rail Safety Week, please visit [www.icc.illinois.gov/rail-safety/illinois-operation-lifesaver](http://www.icc.illinois.gov/rail-safety/illinois-operation-lifesaver).