



Gov. JB Pritzker Proclaims September 20-26 Rail Safety Week In Illinois

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CHICAGO – Governor JB Pritzker has proclaimed September 20-26 as Rail Safety Week in Illinois. In recognition, the Illinois Commerce Commission in conjunction with Operation Lifesaver will be sharing rail safety facts, tips, and resources to raise awareness about motorists and pedestrian safety around railroad tracks and trains. Operation Lifesaver is a national non-profit rail safety organization.

During 2020, 98 vehicle crashes were reported at public highway-rail grade crossings, resulting in 15 fatalities and 32 personal injuries in Illinois. In addition, 55 pedestrians

trespassing on railroad property rights-of-way were struck by passing trains, resulting in 28 fatalities and 27 personal injuries. Illinois ranks fourth in the nation in trespass and grade crossing fatalities in 2020. 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.

“Too often lives are lost and families devastated to crashes involving trains. Most of these accidents were preventable. Rail Safety Week serves as an important reminder about the dangers associated with highway-rail grade crossings and to educate the public about ways to stay safe,” said ICC Brian Vercruysse, Rail Safety Program Administrator.

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, Illinois Pupil Transportation Advisory Committee, 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.

This week, the Illinois Commerce Commission is holding a transportation policy session to reflect on 150 years of rail safety policies in Illinois and look ahead to future challenges and opportunities. 2021 is the Sesquicentennial anniversary of the ICC’s earliest origin as the Illinois Railroad and Warehouse Commission. Following these panel discussions, Class 1 Railroads doing business in Illinois will provide presentations to the Commission about the progress they made in 2020 to expand their supplier diversity spending efforts and goals for 2021.

You are encouraged to follow the ICC on @ILCommerceComm on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and at the Illinois Commerce Commission page on LinkedIn for rail safety facts and tips. For more rail safety statistics, tips, and educational materials visit the ICC website [here](#) or the Operation Lifesaver website www.oli.org.