

Gov. JB Pritzker Proclaims September 18-24, 2023, Rail Safety Week in Illinois

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CHICAGO - Governor JB Pritzker has proclaimed September 18-24, 2023, Rail Safety Week in Illinois, marking the 10th year of the statewide awareness initiative. In recognition, the Illinois Commerce Commission and Operation Lifesaver, a national rail safety non-profit, will be conducting a week-long safety blitz across the state to share rail safety facts, tips, and resources to keep motorists and pedestrians safe around railroad tracks.

“As Governor, there’s nothing more important than keeping Illinoisans safe,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “This Rail Safety Week, my administration and the Illinois Commerce Commission are proud to partner with Operation Lifesaver to raise awareness about rail safety throughout the state—from Cook County and Sangamon County to Dupage County and Kane County—so that motorists, pedestrians, and train passengers alike have the information and resources they need to keep themselves and their families safe.”

“Track tragedies are preventable tragedies, which is why our Operation Lifesaver presentations arm Illinoisians with education on how to make safe decisions around tracks,” said Aisha Jackson, Illinois Operation Lifesaver Coordinator and ICC Rail Safety Specialist. “In observance of Rail Safety Week, look and listen for warning signals of an oncoming train to help drive down the number of rail-related accidents in Illinois.”

Eighty-one percent of crashes at public grade crossings in Illinois occur where active warning devices, such as flashing lights, ringing bells and/or gates already exist. During 2022, 129 vehicle crashes were reported at public highway-rail grade crossings, resulting in 30 fatalities and 39 personal injuries in Illinois. An additional 62 pedestrians trespassing on railroad rights-of-way were struck by passing trains, resulting in 39 fatalities and 23 personal injuries.

“Illinois is home to one of the most extensive and intricate rail networks in the U.S.,” said ICC Chairman Doug Scott. “Our railways play a pivotal role in connecting our nation, and this means our state has a crucial responsibility to ensure the safety of those who live near, work on, or travel across our railways.”

“Being informed about rail safety saves lives,” said ICC Commissioner Michael T. Carrigan. “The knowledge of what railroad signs and signals mean for both drivers and pedestrians is a critical component of the ICC’s ongoing rail safety efforts, and Rail Safety Week is an important opportunity to remind the public how to stay safe around Illinois’ many railroad crossings.”

"Public education on rail safety is a life-saving priority for our freight railroads," said Tim Butler, President of the Illinois Railroad Association. “We encourage people to stay safe around railroad tracks by stopping, looking, and listening for approaching trains and to spread the word that staying aware and focused near railroads can help prevent accidents and deaths."

Illinois’ efforts are supported by the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (ILACP) partnered with Amtrak, BNSF, CN Railway, Canadian Pacific Kansas City, CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Metra, Belt Railway

of Chicago, and Indiana Harbor Belt 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.

See below for a list of safety blitzes and other rail safety events happening in your area. If you would like to request an Operation Lifesaver presentation, please contact the ICC's Rail Safety Coordinator [Aisha Jackson](#).

Safety Blitzes and Community Events

Cook County

Monday, September 18

- Rail Safety Week Kickoff Event, Canadian National Railway Training Facility 10:00-11:00am
- Metra Station Blitz, Ogilvie Transportation Center 5:30-8:45am
- Metra Station Blitz, LaSalle Street 5:30-8:45am

Wednesday September 20

- Metra Station Blitz, Chicago Union Station 5:30-8:45am
- BNSF- Naperville Metra Station 5:30-8:45am

Thursday, September 21

- Metra Station Blitz, Van Buren Station 5:30-8:45am

Dupage County

Thursday, September 21

- BNSF- Route 59 Metra Station 5:30-8:45am

Friday, September 22

- BNSF- Aurora Metra Station 5:30-8:45am

Kane County

Saturday, September 23

- Fox River Trolley Museum/Illinois Operation Lifesaver Free Train Rides, 365 S La Fox St, South Elgin, IL 60177, 11am-3pm

Sangamon County

Thursday, September 21

- ICC-Springfield Amtrak Station 8:00-11:00am

About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission's Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices and bureaus, click [here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

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