

Illinois Rail Crossing Safety Program



Illinois Commerce Commission



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Transportation Bureau/Rail Safety Section

527 East Capitol Avenue

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www.icc.illinois.gov

Illinois Rail Crossing Safety Program

Illinois has more than 7,200 miles of railroad track which is the 2nd largest rail system of any state in the nation. About 500 million tons (1 trillion pounds) of freight moves on Illinois' rail system each year which is the most of any state in the nation. There are over 39 railroad companies that operate trains in and through Illinois. Illinois has 11,192 public highway-rail crossings. Of these 8,467 are public at-grade crossings and 2,725 are public grade separated (bridge) crossings.

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is the state agency with regulatory authority over railroads in Illinois. The ICC employs rail safety engineers and federally certified railroad inspectors. The ICC's rail safety staff responds to inquiries and complaints and conducts specialized inspections of railroad tracks, rail operations, hazardous material transportation and grade crossing signal systems. The ICC also monitors railroad rights-of-way and grade crossing surface conditions, as well as visibility obstructions at rail crossings.

Crossing Safety

- **GRADE CROSSING PROTECTION FUND (GCPF):** project selection and management of GCPF highway-rail safety projects which include safety improvements such as the installation of new warning systems, highway approach improvements and the construction/reconstruction of grade separation structures. The General Assembly appropriates \$27 million annually for GCPF projects.
- **ENGINEERING OVERSIGHT:** engineering oversight of all improvements and modifications to the State's 11,192 public highway-rail crossings and oversight of all highway traffic signal systems interconnected with railroad warning devices.
- **ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS:** investigation of highway-rail grade crossing collisions and other rail related accidents and incidents that occur in Illinois; coordinate efforts with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

- **PUBLIC COMPLAINTS:** Investigation of citizen, highway agency and public official complaints concerning highway-rail grade crossings and other rail safety issues.
- **OPERATION LIFESAVER:** public education and outreach through Illinois' Operation Lifesaver program that reaches communities and schools statewide.
- **WARNING SYSTEM INSPECTIONS:** On-site inspections of crossing warning systems are conducted throughout Illinois to evaluate maintenance, repair efforts and operating conditions.
- **CROSSING DATABASE and ACCIDENT STATISTICS:** maintenance of a comprehensive highway-rail crossing database and train-vehicle collision tracking system.

Safety is our Highest Priority

Railroad safety is one of the ICC's highest priorities and we are proud of our accomplishments. Based on the reduction of train-vehicle collisions, the ICC's Rail Safety Program has become one of Illinois' most effective public safety programs. Since 1990, motor vehicle-train crashes at grade crossings in Illinois declined by 52 percent and the number of fatalities dropped by 53 percent. This substantial improvement was achieved during a period of steady increase in the amount of train traffic and in the number of registered motor vehicles and licensed drivers in Illinois. Over the past 10 years, the ICC has participated in the performance of safety improvements at over 3,543 public highway-rail crossings. We look forward to working with your community to help make Illinois' grade crossings as safe as possible.



Crossing Safety Improvement Funding

Applying for Funding

APPLYING FOR STATE GCPF ASSISTANCE

To request Grade Crossing Protection Fund "GCPF" assistance, the local highway authority or railroad should submit an application to the ICC. The GCPF application can be found at www.icc.illinois.gov. GCPF assistance may be used for public highway-rail crossings located on the local street system. The following highway-rail crossing safety improvements are eligible for assistance from the GCPF:

- Installation of new crossing warning devices.
- Upgrade of existing system control circuitry.
- Highway approach improvements.
- The construction of connecting roads to facilitate crossing consolidations.
- Construction or reconstruction of Grade separation structures.
- Traffic signal-railroad warning device interconnect improvements.
- Pedestrian grade separation structures.
- Incentive payments for voluntary crossing closures.

APPLYING FOR FEDERAL RAIL SAFETY FUNDS

To request federal funding, the local highway authority or railroad should contact IDOT's Bureau of Local Roads and Streets, Room 205, 2300 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, IL 62764. Typical improvements eligible for federal rail safety funding include:

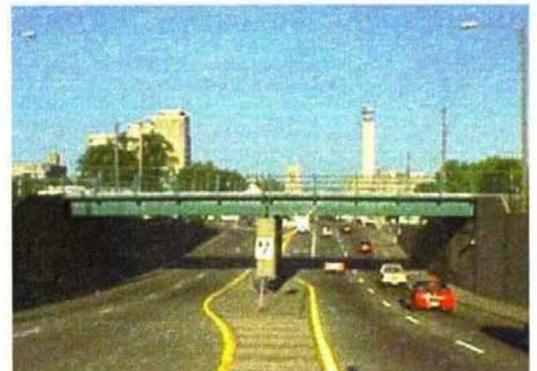
- Installation of new crossing warning devices.
- Upgrade of existing system control circuitry.
- Highway approach improvements.
- Incentive payments for voluntary crossing closures.



Questions or Concerns?

Call the ICC's Rail Safety Section at (217) 782-7660 or log on to www.icc.illinois.gov to:

- Register a complaint about a rail safety concern.
- Inquire about funding for rail crossing warning devices and other crossing safety improvements.
- Ask about the ICC's crossing closure incentive program.
- Obtain information about railroad operations in Illinois or information about a specific rail line or crossing.
- Obtain information about Illinois' Operation Lifesaver program or schedule an Operation Lifesaver presentation for your local school or community.



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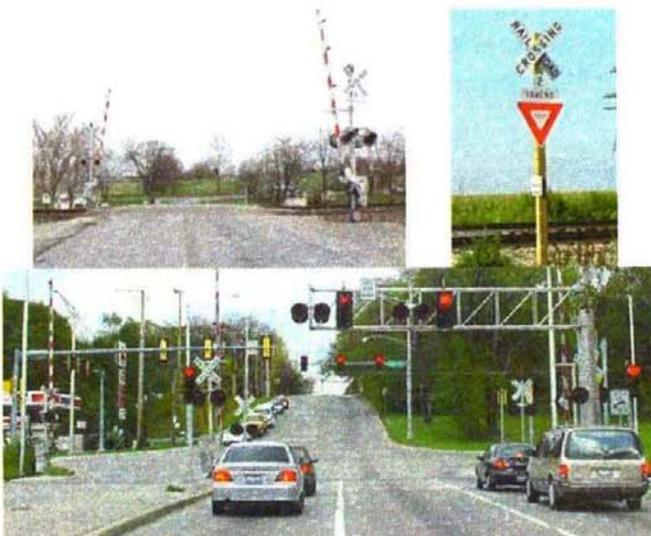
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To schedule presentations or for information on Operation Lifesaver contact:

Chip Pew
ICC State Coordinator
Illinois Operation Lifesaver
Tel. (847) 433-3943
E-mail: cpew@icc.illinois.gov

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To report railroad emergencies, grade crossing crashes, and other incidents:

ICC Accident/Incident Hot Line
(217)782-4971

Alton & Southern Railway Company
(618) 482-7763

Belt Railway Company of Chicago
(708) 496-4056

BNSF Railway Company
(800) 333-2383

Canadian National/Illinois Central Railroad Co (GTW & WCL).
(800) 465-9239

Canadian Pacific (Soo Line)
(800) 766-4357

Chicago Central and Pacific Railroad Company
(800) 465-9239

CSX Transportation, Inc.
(800) 232-0144

Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company
(815) 740-6742

Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad Company
(219) 989-4802

Indiana Railroad Company
(800) 677-1985

Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd.
(800) 321-3891

Kansas City Southern Railway Company
(816) 529-4001

METRA
(877) 349-4283

Norfolk Southern Railway Company
(800) 453-2530

Toledo, Peoria & Western Railway Company
(888) 293-3443

Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis
(618) 451-8478

Union Pacific Railroad
(800) 848-8715