EVERYONE IS A PEDESTRIAN

always expect a train

CROSSING RAILROAD TRACKS SAFELY DEMANDS CAREFUL "FOOTWORK"

Railroads have been an important part of transportation for over 150 years, and people from all walks of life are interested in trains!

Pedestrians should always be cautious around trains and take special care in safely crossing railroad or transit tracks. This means crossing only at designated public crossings, which are indicated by the presence of a "crossbuck" sign and a specially designed, paved crossing surface. Public crossings may also feature active warning devices such as flashing red lights. Some busy crossings even have red-and-white gates that are activated by special electronic systems that can detect the approach of a train, often before you can see it coming.

Every year, over 450 people are killed as a result of dangerous and illegal activities on or near railroad tracks and equipment. Knowing how and where to cross safely is the key to a safe walk, no matter where you're going!

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DON'T EVER TAKE A SHORTCUT ACROSS RAILROAD TRACKS! CROSS ONLY AT CROSSINGS!

Walking along or across the railroad tracks at any place other than a public crossing is not only unsafe at any time of night or day, it's also illegal! Railroad property is private property, and it's not legal to be there if you don't work for the railroad! Railroad property typically is much wider than just the rails and the stone ballast under them — don't walk along the railroad or try to shortcut across the tracks, no matter how inviting it looks!

MODERN TRAINS ARE QUIETER THAN EVER BEFORE, AND MANY RAIL LINES HAVE MORE AND FASTER TRAINS!

"Always expect a train" in any direction and on any track. Faster, quieter trains can arrive suddenly — almost before you can hear them coming. Don't walk along or sneak across the tracks, even if you think you're very familiar with the area and think you "know" that "trains only come through here late at night." You may be surprised!

Crossing the tracks at a public crossing is very different from crossing a street. When crossing the street, cars can be expected to stop at a STOP sign or red traffic signal, allowing you to cross. At a grade crossing, you must remember that trains will not stop for you (a freight train going 55 mph needs over a mile to stop!), and any signals there are meant to alert you that a train is approaching. You should NOT try to cross until all trains have passed and any signals have stopped operating.

Safe walking means crossing tracks only at public crossings after checking the warning devices and looking "left, right, then left again," just as you would when crossing a street.

DON'T BE TEMPTED TO "SHORT-CUT" YOUR WAY HOME ALONG THE TRACKS, AND DON'T USE RAILROAD PROPERTY AS A PLACE TO "HANG AROUND"!

Railroad property is private property; it's a serious workplace that can be dangerous even for railroad employees who have learned the safety rules and practices required to do this very specialized work.

When you're out walking, even if it's just for recreation, remember that railroad tracks and other railroad property are no place for the public — so be safe, and stay away!

Remember these and other crossing rules — review these tips with others

View our website at http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/ped_bike.htm