



# "Safety & Compliance are Never a Compromise"

## Keep it moving!

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### Railroad crossings: Preventing accidents

Ninety-six percent of rail-related fatalities are the result of incidents at railroad crossings and by trespassers, according to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). In 2015, 244 individuals were fatally injured at railroad crossings. Most of these incidents are preventable.



As a professional driver, you should be aware of railroad crossing safety including the applicable regulations and tips for being safe when crossing the tracks.

#### The regulations

Section 392.10 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) is specific when it comes to what types of vehicles must stop at railroad crossings and where they must stop. The following vehicles must stop within 50 feet of, and no closer than 15 feet to the railroad tracks:

- Buses transporting passengers;
- Commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) transporting any quantity of a Division 2.3 chlorine;
- Certain classifications of CMVs which are required to be marked or placarded, including:
  - Division 1.1;
  - Division 1.2 or Division 1.3;
  - Division 2.3 Poison gas;
  - Division 4.3;
  - Class 7;
  - Class 3 Flammable;
  - Division 2.2;
  - Division 2.3 Chlorine;
  - Division 6.1 Poison;
  - Division 2.2 Oxygen;
  - Division 2.1;
  - Class 3 Combustible liquid;
  - Division 4.1;
  - Division 5.1;
  - Division 5.2;
  - Class 8; and
  - Division 1.4.
- Cargo tank motor vehicles, whether loaded or empty, used for the transportation of any hazardous material;
- Cargo tank motor vehicles transporting a commodity which at the time of loading has a temperature above its flashpoint; and
- Cargo tank motor vehicles, whether loaded or empty, transporting any commodity

*(continued on page 2)*

## Railroad crossings: Preventing accidents *(continued from page 1)*

under exemption in accordance with Part 107, Subpart B of the Hazardous Materials Regulations.

When at a railroad crossing, the driver must listen and look in each direction along the tracks for an approaching train and make certain a train is not approaching. When crossing the tracks the driver cannot shift gears.

There are also certain instances when stopping at railroad tracks isn't required. This includes abandoned crossings which are marked with a sign as abandoned, an industrial or spur line railroad grade crossing marked with a sign reading exempt, a streetcar crossing, or a railroad track used exclusively for industrial switching purposes within a business district.

For vehicles that are not required to stop, Sec. 392.11 of the FMCSRs requires travel at a rate of speed that is slow enough to stop before reaching the tracks. The tracks may not be crossed until the driver is certain the crossing is clear.



### Driver disqualification

A conviction for any one of six railroad-highway grade crossing offenses while operating a CMV requiring a commercial driver's license (CDL) will disqualify a driver from driving a CMV. The offenses, which are listed in Sec. 383.51 of the FMCSRs include:

- Failing to stop or slow down when required;
- Failing to have enough space to completely cross without stopping;
- Failing to obey a traffic control device; and
- Failing to negotiate a crossing because the vehicle has insufficient undercarriage clearance.

The disqualification period is at least:

- 60 days for the first conviction;
- 120 days for a second conviction in 3 years; and
- 1 year for a third or subsequent violation in 3 years.

If a driver is disqualified he/she may not drive, and his/her employer may not require/allow the driver to drive a CMV for the disqualification period.

### Safety tips

Like a truck or bus, a train cannot stop on a dime. It takes the average freight train, traveling at 55 mph, a mile or more to stop.

When it comes to crossing the tracks, on a level road with good surface conditions, it takes an 80,000 pound, 53-foot rig about 14 seconds to clear a single track.

The following are safety tips all drivers should follow when it comes to railroad crossings.

- Always expect a train. Freight trains do not travel at fixed times, and passenger train schedules can vary.
- Trains have the right of way 100 percent of the time.
- It is extremely difficult to judge a train's speed as well as its distance from the tracks. If unsure of being able to safely cross, wait until the train has passed.
- Never race a train to the crossing.
- Never drive around lowered gates. As well as being dangerous, it is illegal.
- Never shift gears when crossing tracks.
- Make sure trailer jacks are in the up/raised position so they do not become stuck on the tracks.
- If the vehicle has a low ground clearance, another route should be selected to make sure the vehicle doesn't get stuck on the tracks.
- When crossing multiple tracks, watch for a second train.

If a vehicle is stuck on the tracks, the driver should get out of the vehicle and move away so he/she is not near the point of potential impact. He/she should call the emergency 800 number posted at the crossing, or dial 911 and provide the exact location, using highway numbers, street names, and/or the DOT number posted at the crossing.





# Safety focus: Your vehicle's emergency equipment

You hope that you never have to use emergency equipment, but when you need to, it is essential to be able to readily access it and that it is in proper working condition.

Section 393.95 of the Federal Motor Carrier Regulations (FMCSRs) states that no commercial motor vehicle shall be driven unless the driver thereof is satisfied that the emergency equipment required by this section is in place and ready for use. Drivers are also required make use of such equipment when needed.

Section 393.95 addresses the emergency equipment that must be carried on the power unit of a commercial motor vehicle or CMV. This includes fire extinguishers, warning devices, and spare fuses.

## Fire extinguishers

If a CMV is not hauling hazardous materials, it must be equipped with either:

- One fire extinguisher with an Underwriters' Laboratory rating of 5 B:C or more; or
- Two fire extinguishers, each with an Underwriters' Laboratory rating of 4 B:C or more.

If a CMV is carrying hazardous materials, it must be equipped with one fire extinguisher with an

Underwriters' Laboratory rating of 10 B:C or more.

The extinguisher(s) must be filled, readily accessible, and securely mounted on the CMV to prevent sliding, rolling, or vertical movement. The extinguisher(s) must be designed and maintained to visually show the charge of the extinguisher(s). The extinguisher(s) must use an extinguishing agent that does not need protection from freezing.

## Warning devices

A CMV must carry warning devices that can be set out in the event of an accident or breakdown. Section 393.95(f) of the FMCSRs require a CMV to carry at least:

- Three bidirectional emergency reflective triangles;
- Six fuses capable of burning for at least 30 minutes; or
- Three liquid burning flares that contain enough fuel to burn continuously for at least 60 minutes.



The warning devices must be placed out within 10 minutes of any event.

Do keep in mind that the regulations prohibit flame-producing devices on vehicles transporting certain kinds of hazardous materials. See Sec. 392.25 of the FMCSRs for details.

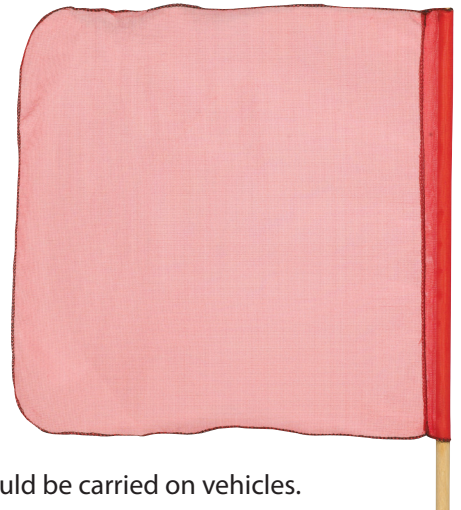
## Spare fuses

If fuses are needed to operate any required parts and accessories on a CMV, at least one spare fuse for each type/size of fuse needed for those parts and accessories must be on the vehicle.

## Red flags

Red flags shall be not less than 12 inches square, with standards adequate to maintain the flags in an upright position.

Check with your company about any additional emergency equipment that should be carried on vehicles.





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## Avoiding mosquito-borne illnesses

*"It's not what  
you look at that  
matters, it's  
what you see."*

Henry David Thoreau



**Mosquitoes can  
transmit diseases  
such as the West  
Nile and Zika  
viruses**

On a beautiful day, protecting yourself from illness may be the farthest thing from your mind. However, if you're heading to an area that's home to mosquitoes and the diseases they carry, it's worth taking time to protect yourself.

Mosquitoes not only have an annoying bite, they can also transmit diseases such as the West Nile and Zika viruses. Because mosquitoes find humans by using receptors which can detect carbon dioxide and skin odor, it's virtually impossible to hide from them without taking preventive measures. To reduce your risk of being bitten and the potential for infection:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and shoes that cover your feet.
- Use an insect repellent containing DEET or picaridin on uncovered skin. Remember to spray the repellent on the outside of your clothing, as mosquitoes can bite through some clothing. Reapply the repellent as directed.
- Avoid areas with standing water, such as marshes.

### **West Nile, Zika cause concern in the U.S.**

Two mosquito-borne diseases found in the United States are the West Nile and Zika viruses. Most individuals infected by either disease have mild symptoms and recover spontaneously. However, there is

a chance that the conditions could lead to severe health problems, and individuals experiencing symptoms should talk with a health care provider.

### **Zika Facts**

The Zika virus is carried by a mosquito that is active both during the day and at night. Transmission of the disease via mosquito has been reported in southern Florida and Texas, as well as in other parts of the world, including Central and South America.

A person infected by the virus may experience fever, red eyes, joint pain, and a rash. A primary concern with the Zika virus is that it can cause serious birth defects. An unborn baby can become infected when the mother contracts the virus.

### **West Nile Facts**

West Nile virus, first detected in North America in 1999, has been found throughout the lower 48 states.

While the majority of people infected with the disease show no symptoms, some people have fatigue or body aches that last for weeks or months. The disease can bring flu-like symptoms, such as fever, a headache, and body aches, as well as a rash.

A small percentage of people infected by the virus develop a serious illness involving inflammation of the brain, such as encephalitis or meningitis.