

Avoid Collisions with Trains

Adapted from *Safety Tips to Avoid Collision with Trains* by Sgt. Kathy Pederson;
Ask a Trooper newspaper column of Buffalo Lake/Hector News**Mirror* June, 2005



Pre-reading

Questions:

- How can you **avoid** a collision with a train?

Definitions:

- Hazardous – full of danger or great risk
- Crossbuck – the X-shaped sign located just before a road crosses railroad tracks

Reading

17 It was a typical evening in the fall of 2004 when, near the small community of Williston,
33 South Carolina, Latrisha Bodie, mother of four, drove four of her co-workers home from their job
52 at the local plant. Bodie tried to make it through the railroad crossing. The two cars ahead of her
70 had gotten through safely. Bodie and her passengers were not as lucky. All five died when a train
70 struck their car.

73 In the U.S. during 2004, there were over 350 people killed and over 1,000 people injured
89 from collisions with trains. These crashes can be **prevented**. The easiest way to be safe is to
106 follow the rules of the railroad signs, lights, and gates.

116 The white crossbucks are warning signs. Many vehicles, such as school buses and vehicles
130 carrying hazardous materials, are required by law to stop at ALL railroad crossings. Be prepared to
146 stop if you are behind one of these vehicles.

155 Flashing red lights always mean a train is near or is switching tracks nearby. Always stop
171 when the lights begin to flash. When the lights stop flashing, **proceed with caution**.

185 When crossing a railroad track, act as though you expect a train at any time. Do not be
203 fooled into thinking a crossing is safe just because you have never seen a train pass by. Freight
221 trains do not run on set schedules. They can be anywhere at anytime going in any direction.

238 Also, watch for second trains. After one has passed, always look for that second train on
254 another track before moving forward.

259 It is against the law to drive through, around, or under lowered gates. Do not have someone
276 in your car hold them up for you. You may cross only if there is a law enforcement officer or a
297 railroad person directing you to cross.

303 Never race a train. Trying to race a train may cost you your life and the life of your
322 passengers. When traveling at 30 miles per hour, a train takes over a mile to stop. A train is bigger
342 than you, and you will be the one that is hurt if you collide.

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Level 6.0

Understanding

1. What does the word **prevent/prevented** mean? _____

2. When can you drive around lowered railroad gates? _____

3. How many people were either killed or injured by train collisions in 2004? _____

4. What does it mean to **proceed with caution**? _____

5. Who must stop at all railroad crossings? Why? _____

6. How can you prevent being hurt in a train/car collision? _____

7. What does the word **avoid** mean? _____

Writing

Option A: Summarize the reading in your own words.

Option B: Write about another train related accident you know of.
