



MaineDOT Flash Facts

Topic: Railroad Safety

The good news is that rail travel is on the increase in Maine. The bad news is that we could see an increase in crashes at railroad crossings and along the tracks.

- More than 3,000 vehicle crashes with trains at grade crossings occurred **nationally** in 2004, resulting in 369 fatalities and 1,000 injuries.
- **Nationally**, nearly 500 people were killed last year by trespassing on rail lines. Make sure you are not one of these statistics this year.

The MaineDOT reminds you:

- Freight and passenger rail service has increased in Maine over the past few years. Trains and tracks have been updated for faster, more reliable service. With more than 600 crossings here in Maine, the risk of a crash is just around the corner.
- Every year casualties occur while people were trespassing on Maine rail lines.
- When approaching a rail crossing - wait - never try to beat a train. In a crash, the train always wins.

Maine's rail network includes freight railroads operating state-wide and passenger trains in southern Maine (with more being planned).

The MaineDOT reminds drivers that rail crossings can be dangerous.

Trains cannot stop quickly. On a dry, level track, it can take a train up to one mile to stop, even in an emergency. To stay safe at railroad crossings, the MaineDOT reminds you:

- Be patient. Slow down when approaching railroad tracks, and be prepared to stop.
- Cross tracks only at designated crossings.
- Look both ways before crossing
- Start to cross tracks only if there is room ahead to move completely across.
- Never stop on railroad tracks.

This information is provided by MaineDOT, for further safety information contact 207-624-3278



The success of the Amtrak Downeaster, and recent freight rail improvements make it even more important to drive with care when approaching railroad tracks.

Severe dangers exist when pedestrians, motorbikes, ATV's and snowmobiles trespass on railroad tracks or property. Last year, nearly 500 people were killed while trespassing on private railroad property nationwide. The MaineDOT offers some safety reminders:

- **It is a criminal offense to trespass on railroad tracks or right-of-way. Trespassers also endanger the lives of those traveling on the train.**
- **Bicyclists and motorcycle riders should always approach and cross a track as close to 90 degrees as possible.**
- **If the railroad tracks are wet – walk your bike across the tracks.**

Be a Road Model: Be safe and aware at railroad crossings. Stop, Look, and Listen when crossing railroad tracks, and Obey active gates, bells or lights at railroad crossings.