

RAIL FAN TIPS AND SECURITY ADVISORY

Rail fans display a great interest in the overall operation of trains and locomotives. They enjoy taking pictures, making videos or just watching railroad operations. However, such recreational activities and hobbies often occur near vital infrastructure and pose significant security concerns. Today, the rail fan's first responsibility must be safety and security.

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the rules of behavior for rail enthusiasts have changed. A new Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has been created to protect the nation's transportation system and its infrastructure in order to ensure the free movement of people and commerce throughout North America. TSA is working closely with the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Association of American Railroads, Operation Lifesaver, railroad police and local law enforcement to protect the nation's rail transportation system.

TSA and its partners urge rail fans to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Do not trespass on railroad property or rights-of-way – it is illegal and dangerous, and will be viewed by law enforcement as a security risk. Remember, railroad property may extend 200 feet on either side of the tracks.
- Do not enter private property without permission.
- Avoid taking pictures of military trains and equipment.
- Never walk out on a railroad bridge or trestle.
- Stay out of railroad tunnels.
- Do not climb on railroad property such as signal bridges, cabinets or other structures.
- Never climb on or crawl under railroad cars or equipment.
- Only take photographs or view trains from public locations.
- When taking pictures from public railroad crossings, stay at least 15 feet away from the nearest rail. This rule applies for staged "photo run-bys" as well.
- Obey all highway-rail grade crossing signs and signals.
- Cooperate fully with railroad police or other law enforcement officers when contacted.
- If suspicious activities are noted, report it to railroad or local law enforcement officers. **DO NOT TAKE ANY FURTHER ACTION!**

By following these guidelines, rail fans can enjoy their hobby and help maintain the security of our nation's rail transportation system.

Set an Example for Rail Safety and Security!

Nearly 1,000 people die each year because they do not understand railroads. They underestimate the power of trains and the dangers around the rails. Operation Lifesaver, a non-profit, national public education program for rail safety asks you to "walk the talk" when it comes to safe behavior around tracks and trains.

People, especially children, learn more from what you DO than what you SAY, especially when they know you are a rail fan.

- Remember, most people do not understand that walking or playing on railroad property is trespassing: It is illegal. It can be deadly. Moreover, law enforcement considers it a serious security risk.
- If you're a railroad photographer, give the crew a break! They have seen too much tragedy and too many close calls already. Please photograph trains from public property only.
- For your own safety, please stand back at least 15 feet from the nearest rail when filming at a public railroad crossing.
- You know not to walk across a railroad trestle or into a railroad tunnel. The danger is too great. If your photographs suggest otherwise, you are leading other people into harm's way. Think about it.
- Resist the temptation to walk down the middle of railroad tracks, even at a rail museum where trains are not moving. Impressionable children may be tempted to copy your behavior on the railroad tracks near home.
- What is your message when you pose small children on railroad tracks or equipment for family photos? Are you misleading them to believe it is OK to climb on railcars parked on a siding in your community?
- Would you like to help deliver Operation Lifesaver's safety messages to driver education students, school bus drivers, professional truckers or others in your community? Volunteer to become a trained Operation Lifesaver Presenter today!

For more information or to volunteer: Visit the Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) website at www.oli.org, and click on "Contact Us", or call 1-800-537-6224.

Look, Listen and Live!

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