

# NHTSA and FRA Launch Rail Crossing Safety Campaign

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The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) today relaunched a \$5.6 million public safety awareness campaign – *Stop. Trains Can't.* – urging Americans to take greater care at highway-rail grade crossings.

In 2018 alone, 270 people were killed at railroad crossings. Of those, 99 people died after the driver went around lowered crossing gate arms – a 10-year high.

"So many fatalities at highway-railway crossings are preventable, and this campaign is key to raising public awareness and saving lives," said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao.

Every four hours in America, a person or vehicle is struck by a train at a rail crossing. Over the past five years, 798 people have died while trying to drive across railroad tracks.

*Stop. Trains Can't.* reminds drivers about the potential risks of an approaching train when crossing railroad tracks, especially when active warning devices such as flashing lights or gate arms are descending or lowered.

Given their size and weight, neither freight nor passenger trains can stop easily to avoid cars or other vehicles on the tracks. Trains cannot swerve out of the way, and a freight train traveling 55 mph can take more than a mile to stop, even when emergency brakes are applied.

"We are pleased to collaborate with our colleagues at NHTSA to improve driver behavior at highway-rail crossings and reduce preventable injuries and deaths," said FRA Administrator Ronald L. Batory. "Rail safety isn't just about the safe movement of passenger and freight trains; it's also about helping the American public be safe near railroad tracks."

"Road safety is NHTSA's mission, and too many lives are lost every year when drivers disregard safety warnings at rail crossings," said NHTSA Deputy Administrator Heidi R. King. "Working with Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao and FRA, we want every American to understand the danger surrounding rail crossings and to act with safety in mind. Trying to save a few minutes can cost you your life."

The campaign's targeted advertising will run from Tuesday, April 16 through Sunday, May 12. It includes video spots that will run on digital and social platforms, radio advertising, and social media messaging, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The new *Stop. Trains Can't.* campaign video can be viewed [here](#).

While national in scope, ads will be targeted to high-incident communities in the following states: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Texas.

- [Watch related videos of Sec. Chao, FRA Administrator Batory, and NHTSA Deputy Administrator King](#)

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