

Operation Lifesaver Public-Rail Safety Week

May 2 – 8, 2011

OTTAWA, April 15, 2011 – [Operation Lifesaver](#) and its partners will launch their 2011 National Public-Rail Safety Week on May 2 to help reduce crossing collisions and trespassing incidents along Canada's railways in communities across the country.

"We have made significant progress in lowering the number of highway/railway crossing collisions and trespassing incidents since we started this initiative 30 years ago," said Operation Lifesaver National Director Dan Di Tota. "However, we need to be vigilant and continue to raise awareness of public-rail safety in Canada through education campaigns like Operation Lifesaver."

There were 79 fatalities and 47 serious injuries involving the public along the railway tracks in Canada in 2010. Of these many involved [crossing collisions and trespasser incidents](#) on railway property. Virtually all were avoidable with due caution.

"Clearly, trying to race a train to a crossing or taking a shortcut through a working rail yard is not an option," Di Tota continued.

Railway crossing safety has been a key focus in Canada over the past thirty years. The rail sector has been working with governments on reducing fatalities and injuries, particularly at grade crossings or when trespassing occurs. In Canada, the focus has been on grade crossing upgrades to improve crossing safety and education, reaching out to communities and improving safety measures.

An average of 1,100 passenger and goods trains operate in Canada every day over some of the world's most rugged terrain and in some of the worst weather conditions. With the assistance of public safety initiatives such as Operation Lifesaver, Canadian rail provides the safest means of ground transportation. Despite increased vehicle registrations, railway traffic and urban sprawl encroaching on traditional rail right of way, analysis of the overall safety record across North America reveals there were 12.9 accidents per million train miles in Canada in 2010, down over 80 percent from the year 2000 (as measured by the Transportation Safety Board of Canada – TSB).

Operation Lifesaver is a national public-rail safety program sponsored by Transport Canada and the members of the [Railway Association of Canada](#). The program works in partnership with provincial safety councils, police, unions, railways, the trucking industry, and community groups. Operation Lifesaver program has an excellent track record and has helped to reduce crossing collisions and trespasser incidents by some 60 per cent since Operation Lifesaver's introduction to Canada in 1981.

Operation Lifesaver Rail Safety Week runs May 2-8, and will include numerous local [events and activities](#) across Canada including crossing blitzes, mock collisions, broadcast of public service announcements, presentations by volunteers in schools, mall displays, media interviews, conferences and speeches to community groups.

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