



# Rail Safety Tips for Municipal Maintenance Workers

Whether you operate a snowplow, a road grader or do other work maintaining municipal infrastructure, working in proximity to railway crossings and tracks can be incredibly risky if you don't know your rail safety rules. Follow these important tips to help you stay safe, and share them with your colleagues—it could save lives.

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## BE PREPARED TO STOP AT ALL RAILWAY CROSSINGS

Slow down and be prepared to stop at all railway crossings. When approaching a crossing, open your window and turn off your fan and audio equipment so you can better hear oncoming trains. If a train is coming, stop behind any gates or stop lines, or no closer than 5 metres from the nearest rail.



## HAVE A CLEAR VIEW OF THE TRACKS

Don't proceed through a railway crossing unless you have a clear view of the tracks and are sure no trains are approaching in either direction, on any track—especially at crossings with no flashing lights, bells or gates. Know how long your vehicle is and be aware of the amount of space on the other side of the crossing. To avoid stalling on the tracks, always cross in low gear without shifting. If you're driving a snowplow or road grader, be sure to raise the blade or other attachments high enough to clear the tracks.



## KEEP RAIL CROSSINGS CLEAR OF SNOW, ICE, SALT AND SAND

Avoid piling snow or ice on or near rail crossings or access roads near tracks. Keep windrows to a minimum as they reduce visibility at crossings. Don't apply sand within three metres of rail crossings to prevent it from being carried onto the tracks. Never dump salt or chemicals directly on or near crossings as it can cause train signals to malfunction. Limit the use of sand and gravel as a build-up could contribute to derailments. If possible, completely clear snow from crossings to expose pavement markings.



## CONTACT THE RAILWAY BEFORE STARTING WORK

Never park your equipment on or walk along railway tracks. If maintenance work needs to be done within eight metres of the tracks or near a crossing, you need permission from the railway to ensure safety and compliance with regulations. Always contact the railway **before** performing work in proximity to a rail crossing or tracks.



## LEAVE YOUR VEHICLE IF IT STALLS OR GETS STUCK

If your equipment stalls or gets stuck at a crossing, get out immediately and move at least 30 metres away from the tracks. Contact the railway company immediately and let them know there is equipment on the tracks. If your equipment hits a rail, signage or signal equipment, report it immediately to the railway. Railway companies post their emergency numbers and crossing locations on a blue Emergency Notification Sign under the crossbuck or near the crossing. This information may also be displayed on a nearby signal house. If you don't see a railway emergency number, call 911.

### REMEMBER:

- Laws, regulations and policies governing work around train tracks vary by province and by railway—know the ones that apply to you, and make sure you're in compliance at all times.
- Anytime is train time. Crossing warning signals sometimes activate just 20 seconds before a train arrives. A large truck can take 18 seconds to clear the tracks from a standing start. So if you're working near a railway crossing, keep unnecessary equipment off the tracks, stay alert and stay safe!
- Report any dangerous conditions at railway crossings directly to the railway company or by calling 911.

# Know the Signs and Signals

## FLASHING RED LIGHTS

STOP when flashing. DO NOT proceed until the lights stop flashing. If the lights begin flashing after you start crossing the tracks, keep going.

## CROSSBUCK

YIELD if a train is approaching. Trains always have the right-of-way.

## LOWERING GATES AND FLASHING RED LIGHTS

A train is approaching (even if you don't see it yet). DO NOT proceed until the lights turn off and the gates go up. It's illegal and dangerous to go around lowered gates.

## MULTIPLE TRACKS

Multiple tracks are present. Multiple tracks may mean multiple trains. Wait until you can see clearly down the tracks in both directions before proceeding.



## PAVEMENT MARKINGS

A large "X" and a wide white line on the road mean you're approaching a railway crossing. Stay behind the white stop line while waiting for a train to pass. No stop line? Stop at least 5 metres from the nearest rail.

## LOW GROUND CLEARANCE CROSSING

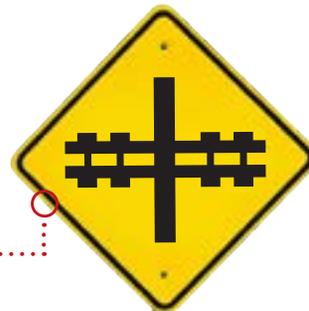
Raised crossing ahead. If you drive anything low to the ground — like a bus, truck, sports car or trailer — you're at risk of getting hung up on the tracks. DO NOT proceed until you know your vehicle will clear the tracks.

## EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SIGN (ENS)

This is the first phone number to call if a vehicle is stuck or stalls on the tracks (this number may also be found on the signal house). You can also dial it to report people, vehicles or debris on the tracks, as well as damaged signs or signals, or obstructed views. The mile post and subdivision listed on the sign will help the railway to identify your location.

## ADVANCE WARNING

Slow down, look, listen, and BE PREPARED TO STOP. Typically, this is the first sign you see when approaching a railway crossing.



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