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TRAIN AND TRACK SAFETY: TRESPASSING

Railroad tracks are private property. Property close to the tracks also belongs to the railroad. People who don't have permission to be on railroad property are trespassing. Railroad property may be posted with different types of "No Trespassing" signs. They all mean "stay off" and "stay away." Even if there isn't a sign, it's still illegal and dangerous to be on the property.

Common mistakes people make when trespassing on railroad property:

- They're focused on what they're doing (walking, fishing off a bridge, etc.) and not paying attention to the tracks.
- They stand too close to the tracks, not realizing that the train is up to six feet wider than the tracks. They also may not realize that chains, straps and other equipment can swing loose from a train and hit them.
- They expect the train to be louder than it is. Or they wear headphones or ride snowmobiles and ATVs that drown out the sound of the train.
- They think the train is farther away and moving slower than it actually is.
- They think the train will be able to stop for them. But, by the time the engineer sees them, it's too late to stop.
- People on railroad bridges or in tunnels think there is enough room for the train to pass them. But there's only room enough for the train, which can be at least three feet wider than the track on each side.

Some people throw objects at trains or put objects on the rails to see what might happen when a train comes. Besides being illegal, it can be deadly for people standing nearby and for the train crew:

- People have been struck by trains while placing objects on the tracks. They didn't get out of the way or they were struck by a train on another track.
- Small objects like coins sometimes get flattened but most often they get pinched by the wheel of the train and shot out with deadly force. They can hit the person who put the object on the track, or other bystanders.
- Large objects can derail a train, causing injuries and even death.
- Something thrown at a train can bounce back with deadly force.

Playing on or under cars is very risky. Cars jerk when they start to move, and jolt without warning. Always use a designated pedestrian crossing to get across the tracks.

Acknowledgments:

[Operation Lifesaver](#)

[Minnesota Operation Lifesaver](#)



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