What is Operation Lifesaver?
Operation Lifesaver is a nationwide, non-profit education and public awareness program, dedicated to ending crashes, deaths and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and on railroad property. To accomplish its task, Operation Lifesaver promotes the 3 E's: Education, Engineering and Enforcement. Operation Lifesaver:
- educates the public about highway-rail grade crossing and pedestrian safety.
- endorses continuous safety improvements at highway-rail grade crossings through design and technology.
- encourages active enforcement of laws governing crossings.

Why do trains have the right-of-way?
Trains simply can't stop in time for a motorist at a crossing. Even if the locomotive engineer fully applies emergency brakes, a train traveling 55 miles an hour can take a mile or more to stop. A car can stop in about 200 feet. The car has the best stopping ability.

Why are trains so long?
Long trains are efficient and cost effective. They carry more goods, which means fewer trains. Typically when a train passes, a crossing may be blocked for about two to four minutes, depending on the train’s speed and length. If the crossing is near a switching yard, it may take longer.

Why does a train sometimes just sit and block a crossing?
There may be times when a train can't move and it becomes necessary to block a crossing longer than normal; for example, when restoring pressure to the air brake system after braking for an emergency.

Why can't trains clear the crossings faster? How fast do they go?
The speed of trains is federally regulated. Speeds are set depending on the track situation or location.

Why don't trains go slower?
Again, trains have set speed regulations. Slowing down a train doesn't necessarily mean fewer crashes: more than half of all crossing collisions occur where train speeds are 30 miles an hour or less.

What should we do when the signals are on and no train is visible?
If there's a railroad emergency number on the railroad equipment at the crossing, call that number; otherwise call 9-1-1 or your local law enforcement agency and give them the exact location.
Acknowledgments:

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