



Providers of Commute Options for Middle Tennessee



APRIL 2008
Volume 3, Issue 4

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Never, Ever Play Chicken with a Train

It is alarming how many cars race trains to a crossing, in order to just barely cross in front of it. After a train runs over a vehicle at a crossing, folks often wonder why the car cut in front of the train, when the train was obviously so close and moving so fast. Impatience on the part of hurried drivers results in hundreds of railroad crossing deaths each year.

As a train approaches, an optical illusion is created that masks the speed of the train -- making it appear to be traveling slower than it really is. The illusion is a result of the train's size and the narrowing aspect of the tracks and train as they recede in the distance. Imagine the horror of a driver and the passengers in a vehicle as they cut in front of a train and suddenly realize they have no time to get out of its way. According to Operation Lifesaver (a non-profit railroad safety organization), the forces of a train/car collision are very close to the same thing as a car running over and crushing an aluminum can!

Respect the train for what it is -- an irresistible force and remember that your car is not an immovable object! A train is like an ocean liner -- it may take it more than a mile to stop. Even if the locomotive engineer sees you, a freight train moving at 55 miles per hour can take a mile or more to stop once the emergency brakes are applied. That's 18 football fields!

Never play chicken with a train by trying to beat it to a grade crossing. Do not drive around lowered gates if the signals indicate a train is coming—it is illegal and could prove to be deadly. Remember to wait after a train passes, until you can clearly see in both directions. Many are killed when they proceed after a train clears a crossing, and a speeding train on a second set of tracks smacks them from the other direction.

If your vehicle gets stuck on the tracks, do not hang around trying to start it, or push it off, if a train is approaching. Get away! If you have to leave your vehicle

behind and you know it is going to be hit, remember to run toward the approaching train, not away from it; the debris from a collision will be thrown ahead of the train and it can overtake and kill you.



According to the Federal Railroad Administration, in 2007, there were 2,728 car-train collisions in the United States, with 71 of those occurring in Tennessee. Don't become a statistic! Be cautious around railroad tracks, and STOP COLD for trains. For more information about Operation Lifesaver, visit: www.oli.org

-Operation Lifesaver



REPORT ACCIDENT CLAIMS IMMEDIATELY TO:

First Horizon Insurance Group
615-385-8341
(Kay Biggs)
-and-
MiMi Lee
615-790-4005 or
After Hours:
615-517-6321

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For more information about our services contact:
The TMA Group
(615) 790-4005
www.tmagroup.org

Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)
(615) 862-8833
www.RTArelaxandride.com

DEFENSIVE ROAD RULES

The "Road Rules" *Van Voices* segment addresses defensive driving practices that every driver and passenger should know.

SHARING THE ROAD WITH BICYCLISTS

Springtime brings longer hours of daylight, flowering trees and shrubs, convertibles, and more bicyclists on the road. As drivers, we must share roadways safely with all users, and bicyclists have every right to be on the road. Keep watch for bikes and be wary in places they might be around. Especially around intersections, there's potential for conflict with bikes -- watch out for riders who ignore traffic signals, make turns on the roadway, or change lanes erratically.

Bicyclists get injured or killed riding the wrong way (against the traffic). If you are exiting a drive, a side street, or a parking lot,

and plan to make a right turn onto the road, look to the right for bicyclists before crossing the sidewalk.

We often look only to the left,

watching for a break in traffic. A rider coming from the right is often not seen; and the resultant collisions cause many injuries and deaths.



Bike lanes are for bikes, so don't drive or park in them. Be especially careful to allow bikes to merge with the flow of traffic as they get close to an intersection. Don't drive on paved shoulders (and don't use them for right turns). Yield the right of way to a bicyclist the same way as you would for any other vehicle, and follow the same rules. Don't crowd them, and don't cut them off. If you are parked along a roadway, be careful not to open your door into the path of a bike -- take a look first and make sure the path is clear.

Never use your horn to tell a bicyclist to get out of the way. Startling bicyclists in this way may cause them to lose control or swerve into traffic. Remember they have the right to use the road, so be careful to pass a bike only when it is safe to do so. You must give the bike plenty of room when passing. The recommended clearance is five feet between your vehicle and the bike -- more if you drive a very large vehicle. If there's no room to pass safely, then your ONLY option is to follow them at a safe distance until there is.

Allow bicycles room to maneuver around hazards. There's often trash, broken glass, and other debris in the areas where bicycles operate. Even a sewer grate or storm drain can cause problems. Trash collects on the sides and center of a road, thrown and blown by tires and wind, then trapped by walls, fences and curbs. Bicyclists will move into traffic to avoid these dangers, and they have the right to use the ENTIRE lane if needed. Anticipate, slow down, and give them room. Allow them to negotiate railroad tracks -- they may need to move into the road to cross them.



Sharing the road with bicycles is not that difficult, but it requires us to think, use common sense, always be courteous, and drive responsibly so that we don't cause danger or harm.

-Road Trip America

VAN SEATS AVAILABLE:

Phil Page: 615-741-8358

Columbia – Downtown Nashville

Ricky Gregory: rgre106630@aol.com

Clarksville—West End

Tanish Horner: 615-343-1705

Spring Hill - Vanderbilt

DID YOU KNOW?

24% of Americans use alternative transportation modes (vanpool, carpool, transit, bike, walk or telecommute) to get to work.

On average, people work 4 days a month just to pay for their cars.

Cars and trucks account for an estimated 50% of air pollution