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HELP STOP TRACK TRAGEDIES

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IT'S RAINING, IT'S POURING. A WEATHER SCENARIO.

Goal of Scenario:

Truck drivers know that weather impacts their day-to-day drives. This scenario asks truckers to utilize and apply what they already know about stopping, accelerating and fully seeing down tracks before making decisions about whether to cross the tracks.

Scenario:

It's the end of a long drive. You've been making good time and are happy with how the day has turned out. Driving through a rural highway, the fog gets heavier. It's thick. You notice that you are driving right by an Advance Warning sign. How does the weather affect your drive? What steps should you take to get ready to make the crossing?

Discussion Points to consider:

- Driving differently when weather is a factor.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the order of steps you should consider when you know you are approaching a rail crossing? Does the order change based on your driving conditions?
2. What other signs and signals should you be on the lookout for?

LOW GROUND CLEARANCE: DECISION TIME.

Goal of Scenario:

Truck drivers should run through a list of what they can do to make decisions before there is an incident. They should think through managing decisions as well as critical changes that must be made in of-the-moment situations, and practice the steps for finding, calling and reporting an emergency on or near the tracks.

Scenario:

It's a beautiful day, and you're making great time. You know you'll get to your delivery location with plenty of time to spare. You see an Advance Warning sign and begin your protocol for approaching the tracks. You start to slow down. As you get closer, you notice a posted Low Ground Clearance sign. In the past, you've always been able to clear these crossings. You slow down and begin your protocols for driving near tracks. Your cab clears the tracks, but then you notice the trailer getting stuck on the tracks. What should you do?

Discussion Points to Consider:

- Consider: When planning your route, seek guidance from your company or agency to determine types of crossings along your route. Before driving, ensure your landing gear is fully retracted. While driving, be mindful that your load will impact weight distribution in your trailer.
- If no train is present: Get out of the cab and move away from the tracks. Locate the ENS sign and call the phone number. Give the crossing ID number and alert the railroad. Move a safe distance away from the tracks (at least 15 feet) to make any additional phone calls.
- If a train is imminent, get out of the vehicle! Run toward the train but away from the track at a 45-degree angle to avoid debris.

Discussion Questions:

1. What should you do if no train is coming?
2. You notice that the gates start to come down as the lights begin to blink and the bells sound. What should you do?



OUT OF THE ORDINARY: NEW ROUTES

Goal of Scenario:

While some aspects of trucking are consistent, every new day may have new challenges. This scenario provides drivers with a chance to consider new traffic flows and patterns. Drivers will learn to adapt to the situation and consider how these situations impact their choices at every crossing, every time.

Scenario:

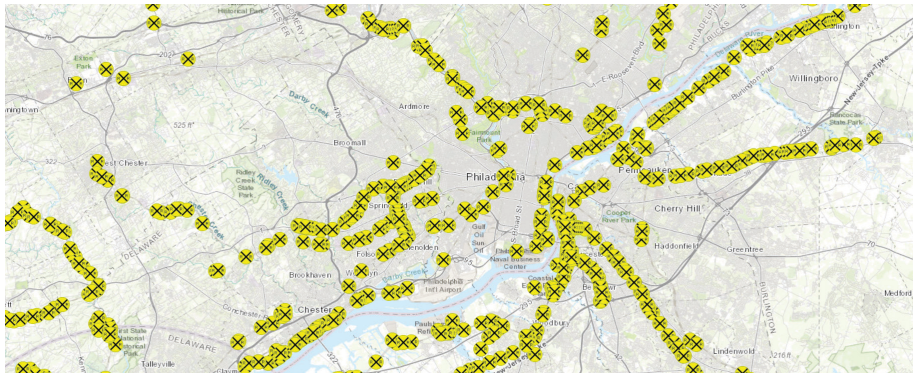
You're driving a new route. But you've got this. You've safely navigated most of the drive, and you're in a very busy part of the city. In all the congestion, you notice there is track line to your left. There is either light rail or a streetcar in this area. Knowing you'll be making a left-hand turn ahead to make your delivery, what do you do to ensure you're staying safe?

Discussion Points to Consider:

- Some transit lines will run in the street, where drivers must share the road. When this is the case, it's important for truckers to know the signals.
- Be alert to signs that tell you if you can cross: such as ONLY TURN ON GREEN ARROWS.
- Use extra caution when approaching turns and consider your sight lines.
- Consider these additional Operation Lifesaver, Inc. resources, found online at www.oli.org/safety-near-trains/passenger-and-transit-rail-safety:
 - Dedicated Left Turns
 - In-Street Running

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some ways you can familiarize yourself with potential crossings?
2. What changes do you make when driving in more congested areas?



HOLDING THE LINE: SAFE TO GO?

Goal of Scenario:

Trucker drivers can only be responsible for themselves and their decisions. By setting their flashers, they are indicating that they will not be moving forward at the crossing. The Emergency Notification System (ENS) sign is useful for more than just a stalled vehicle: if you think that the lights and gates are malfunctioning, call the railroad. They can provide additional information while you wait for the situation to be corrected.

Scenario:

On the approach to a crossing, you notice that the lights are flashing and the gate is down. You follow your protocol and come to a full and complete stop. You sit back, waiting for the train to pass. But a train never comes. Traffic is beginning to pile up behind you, and some of the other car drivers seem to be ready to inch around you. You look left, then right and left again and still do not see a train. There is no flagger present, and no officer on any of the cross streets. You wait again, noticing that there is even more traffic behind you. What should you do?

Discussion points to consider:

- NEVER drive around a lowered gate.
- Do not inch forward: stay stopped no closer than 15 feet and no further than 50 feet. Gates are not activated or triggered by traffic movement.
- This is a good time to use the Emergency Notification System sign. Turn on your hazards and safely exit to the ENS sign.
- Follow the steps to call the railroad using the ENS sign:
 - From a safe distance, call the number to report a potential problem.
 - Give the dispatcher the crossing ID Number. Remember that this number is different at every crossing.
- AFTER you have called the ENS number and reported the issue to the railroad, stay back. Make any additional calls to your agency or supervisor from a safe distance.



Discussion Questions:

1. You can't control this situation. But you CAN alert the railroad. This could potentially cause you to become stressed. What are the additional things you should do if you are concerned about your time?

LEFT, RIGHT AND... TREE?

Goal of Scenario:

Truck drivers drive throughout a range of situations. Every day is a unique experience in geography, weather and many more conditions. Each drive is handled with care, and each crossing requires attention to unique details. In this scenario, truckers consider what to do when physical landscapes make sight lines difficult.

Scenario:

You're on a new route, one that's taking you through some very pastoral land. You've seen farms and now seem to be driving through the tallest corn stalks you've ever seen. You notice a crossbuck, and know you're coming to a more rural, passive crossing. You begin to follow your protocols, slowing down and judging that you've come to a complete stop no closer than 15 feet from the track. Only, you can't see around the vegetation. You don't want to go over the tracks until you can fully see down the tracks. What should you do?

Discussion points to consider:

- Know your vehicle. When there is no stop line, you'll need to know to stay far enough back from the tracks (at least 15 feet and no further than 50 feet from the nearest track).
- If you still can't see from 15 feet, slowly inch forward until you can see fully down the track by looking and leaning.

Discussion Questions:

1. Some crossings may have vegetation that obscures a motorist's sight lines. Before deciding to go, consider:
 - a. Can you see down the track in both directions?
 - b. Have you created a quiet cockpit to listen for a train?
2. Do you think this is a good time to contact the railroad? How would you contact the railroad?



READING THE ROAD.

Goal of Scenario:

Many drivers think all crossings have lights and gates. These are Active Crossings, with warning devices. But there are other types of warning devices such as pavement markings, the Advance Warning sign and the Crossbuck. Drivers should be able to read the road to make an informed decision at every crossing, every time.

Scenario:

As you're driving, you notice a diamond-shaped sign. It looks like there's a railroad crossing coming up immediately after you make your left turn. You slow down and turn on your turn signal, indicating that you will be taking this turn. As you turn, you see a crossbuck indicating the crossing ahead, and slow down. Up to this point, what else should you do?

Discussion points to consider:

- These turns may also have traffic lights on the other side. Whether there is traffic beyond the crossing or not, be sure to pull up to the indicated stop line and follow your protocols. If no stop line, be sure to stop no closer than 15 feet and no further than 50 feet from the nearest rail.
- Know the length of your vehicle. You want to ensure you can complete the left turn without blocking any oncoming traffic, so before deciding to turn, be sure that you can fully fit.
- When deciding to go, fully scan the road before you proceed. Ensure that you can fully clear all tracks before making the decision to turn. If you can't fit, don't commit!

Discussion Questions:

1. How would you handle this crossing if there were multiple cars before and after the crossing, assuming your truck may not fit at this intersection?
2. If this crossing were signed to have multiple tracks (meaning there are more than one set of tracks at the crossing), what additional care do you take at the crossing?
3. Extension: Imagine that this crossing is followed by traffic lights just beyond the crossing. There is traffic on the other side of the crossing, so you wait no closer than 15 feet to the track. As the flow of traffic begins to move, you see the light switch to yellow. What are the factors that inform your decision about whether to go? What signs or signals help you make this choice?