

New Brochure Addresses Railroad Crossing Safety Tips for Trailer Drivers

Publication attempts to reduce human and equine fatalities.

July 19, 2008

The average freight train traveling at 55 mph takes a mile or more to stop—that's about the length of 18 football fields. So if your truck and trailer get stuck on the tracks and a train is coming, the outcome is bad.

In light of the hazards associated with railroad crossings and trains, Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI), and USRider have teamed up to develop an informative brochure with tips for safely approaching and crossing railroad tracks. The Railroad Crossing Tips for Equestrians brochure is available for download on both the Operation Lifesaver Inc website, www.oli.org, and the USRider website, www.usrider.org.

The initiative stems from an accident study that USRider conducted with Dr. Tomas Gimenez, professor of Animal and Veterinary Sciences at Clemson University, and Dr. Rebecca Gimenez, an animal physiologist and a primary instructor in technical large-animal emergency rescue. These two experts in large-animal emergency rescue have been assisting USRider in gathering and analyzing data about horse trailer accidents. The data has been used to formulate recommendations for preventing accidents and enhancing the safety of horses.

From studying hundreds of incidents involving horse trailers, the researchers found that when a tow vehicle and horse trailer are involved in a collision with a train, the tow vehicles and trailers don't fare so well. In a review of over 400 horse trailer accidents, the accidents involving trains had a very high likelihood of a human or equine fatality.

The Railroad Crossing Tips for Equestrians brochure has some excellent safety tips, both obvious and little known.