



Sunflower State Signal

Official Publication of Kansas Operation Lifesaver, Inc.

Coordinator's Corner



Well, it's time to start crunching the numbers again and comparing years of tragic incidents. This year has been one of experimentation for KS OL. We tried formats and initiatives we haven't used ever or in a while.

We have run PSAs on billboards, radio, social media, in apps, and on a train! We have also helped the homeless keep warm, informed drivers of all levels, reached students through Trunk or Treats, Farmers at the Four State Farm Show, and countless other events reaching over 9,000 Kansans, and that's just those that were reported.

While our efforts seem to be reflected in our numbers. I am leery of jumping to conclusions. In October alone I have received KDOT reports of nine incidents. I did not add these to our numbers as I am unsure what cases the FRA has closed and already included. What I do know, is that each year our efforts are reflected in future numbers. Which is obvious if you just look at the [stats](#).

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TRAINS ARE GETTING LONGER

Between 2008 – 2019 the FRA saw about a 25% increase in the length of Class 1 freight trains, with an average length of 1.4 miles in 2017. This increase is happening again.

Since the onset of the pandemic BNSF has been combining trains, blending different types of traffic in the same trains, and operating more double length loaded unit trains of grain and coal.

But unlike the other Class I railroads, BNSF's move toward handling its tonnage on fewer but longer trains is being done on a more limited basis, as it aims to strike a balance between productivity and service. "We're considering both customer and BNSF needs," Chief Marketing Officer Steve Bobb says.

BNSF is combining all sorts of other traffic into double-length trains for parts of their trips across the railroad: Domestic and international stack trains, high-priority Z-symbol premium intermodal trains with Q-symbol intermodal trains, domestic-domestic and international-international combos, and international intermodal with empty grain unit trains.

Some freight trains are exceeding 2.8 miles in length

Yet despite running some trains that exceed 14,000 or even 15,000 feet, BNSF's average train length in May was 6,900 feet, up just 200 feet from a year ago. And BNSF's use of longer trains pales in comparison to Union Pacific, which has boosted train length by 30%, to 9,247 feet, since adopting a Precision Scheduled Railroading operating model in late 2018.

the arrangement of train cars and locomotives—known as "train makeup"—and the potential for blocking highway-railroad crossings are issues to consider to safely operate longer freight trains. To prevent derailment, stakeholders said it is important that longer trains are arranged appropriately and that crews are trained to operate them. While Class I railroads and others said that longer trains may decrease the frequency of blocked crossings, some state and local officials said these trains can prolong their duration, posing challenges for emergency responders unable to cross the tracks.



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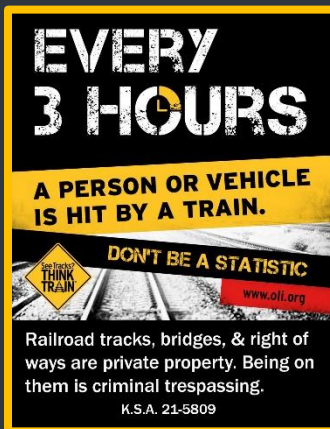
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Advertisement run in the
Kansas Wildlife 2021
Fishing Regulations

Operation Lifesaver, Inc.'s Champion Award

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 29, 2021 –
[Operation Lifesaver, Inc. \(OLI\)](#),
the national rail safety education nonprofit,
today named **Jennie Glasgow**,

State Coordinator of [Georgia Operation Lifesaver](#),

as the recipient of its 2021 Champion Award in recognition of over 40 years advancing rail safety education. OLI Executive Director Rachel Maleh announced the award during the 2021 Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator Summit in Omaha, Neb. OLI established the Champion Award in 2010 to recognize a person who “champions” and advances the organization’s community safety goals. The award honors an individual who, through their work, contributes significantly to the mission in any of the three “E” components of rail safety: education, enforcement, or engineering.

“In her 14 years as a volunteer and 33 years as Georgia Operation Lifesaver’s first and only state coordinator, Jennie Glasgow has raised the organization’s profile through her connections with state and national government executives, sports teams, corporations and other nonprofits, all while expanding the organization’s reach and partnerships,” said Maleh. “On behalf of OLI, I am proud to recognize Jennie for her decades of service saving lives and making communities safer in Georgia and across the U.S.,” she stated.

“What a thrill to be acknowledged and recognized by Operation Lifesaver, Inc. with this prestigious Award! I can only hope that I might have made a difference in someone’s life by providing them with information that has kept them from making a wrong decision at a highway-railroad crossing and perhaps thereby saving their life,” said Glasgow. “Being involved with Operation Lifesaver has been an honor. I will always remain an advocate for railroad and traffic safety. Thank you for this honor!”

Glasgow’s involvement in safety issues began in 1969, when she started the “Bee a Buckler” Safety Program, a nonprofit effort to educate the public about the importance of using safety belts and other safe driving practices. The Georgia Safety Council, which founded Georgia Operation Lifesaver in 1974, that year asked her to include railroad safety in “Bee a Buckler” volunteer presentations to schools and civic organizations. In 1988, Glasgow was named the first paid fulltime Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator.

Appointed by five Georgia governors to the National Association of Women Highway Safety Leaders (NAWSHL), Glasgow serves as NAWSHL historian and is a past president of the nonprofit highway safety organization. She served as a Community Heroes Torchbearer at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games in recognition of her outstanding community leadership and received a 1995 Lifetime Achievement Award from the SafeAmerica Foundation for over 40 years promoting railroad crossing safety.

Georgia State Coordinator
honored for four decades of
saving lives

THE FORCE OF A TRAIN HITTING YOUR CAR
EQUALS THE FORCE
OF YOUR CAR CRUSHING A CAN.



RAIL SAFETY WEEK 2021

Kansas Incidents 2021

Trespassing Incidents

7

Deaths

5

Injuries

2

Crossings Incidents

16

Deaths

1

Injuries

2

Total Incidents

23

Deaths

6

Injuries

3

These numbers are subject to change as the FRA is still investigating cases. Their numbers will be updated as cases close not as incidents happen.



Positive Enforcement Lanes in Kechi, Mulvane, Derby, North Wichita, Valley Center, Newton, & Sedgwick



Officer on the Train collaboration with WATCO, K&O Railway, KHP, Wichita PD, Sedgwick County Sheriffs, & BNSF Police gave out 23 crossing violations and contacted 2 trespassers in two hours.



KS OL had a booth and the crash car was seen at the Great Plains Transportation Museum in Wichita and in Caldwell for a city-wide safety fair for area 5th graders.



A HUGE Thank You to Captain Matt Vogt for organizing all our law enforcement & Sedgwick County RSW activities

KS OL OUT & ABOUT



Drivers Ed Classes are seeing an increase in students and more teens are learning about Rail Safety at Buckle Up Driving School in Lawrence





FRA National Statistics* Last 5 years:

2017:

Incidents: 2,234
Crossings: 1,378
Trespass: 856

2018:

Incidents: 2,056
Crossings: 1,211
Trespass: 845

2019:

Incidents: 1,682
Crossings: 1,075
Trespass: 607

2020:

Incidents: 1,852
Crossings: 1,217
Trespass: 635

2021:

Incidents: 1,979
Crossings: 1,344
Fatalities: 151
Injuries: 408
Trespass: 635
Fatalities: 340
Injuries: 295

*Based on previous 4th Quarter reporting. Not complete statistics for any year



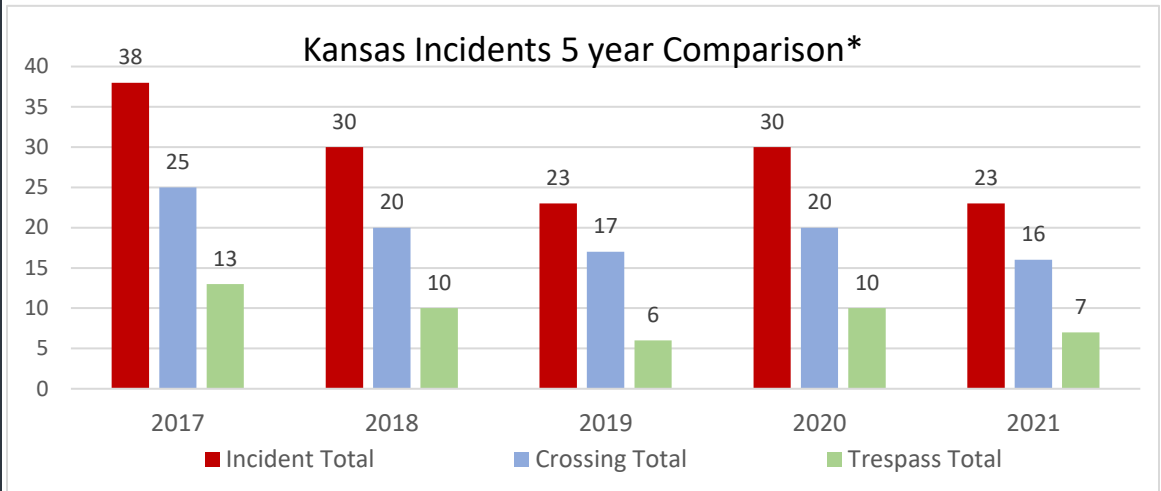
2021 FRA STATISTICS (So Far*)

2021 KANSAS INCIDENTS:

TOTAL: 23

Total Crossings: 16 Total Trespass: 7
Injuries: 2 Injuries: 5
Fatalities: 1 Fatalities: 2

*Based on previous 4th Quarter reporting. Not complete statistics for any year



2020 Crossing Incidents* Counties:

4	Wyandotte	1	Marion
1	Chase	1	Marshall
1	Clark	1	Osage
1	Crawford	1	Pawnee
1	Edwards	1	Sedgwick
1	Hamilton	1	Seward
2	Harvey	1	Sumner
2	Johnson		

2020 Trespass Incidents* Counties:

4	Sedgwick
1	Butler
1	Cowley
1	Harvey
1	Lyon
1	Reno
1	Shawnee

2021 Crossing Incidents* Counties:

2	Wyandotte	1	Lyon
2	Shawnee	1	Marion
2	Butler	1	Montgomery
1	Harvey	1	Osage
1	Johnson	1	Sedgwick
1	Labette	1	Sumner
1	Linn		

2021 Trespass Incidents* Counties:

1	Douglas
1	Harvey
1	Johnson
1	Miami
1	Sedgwick
1	Shawnee
1	Wyandotte

UP COMING EVENTS

November 10th, 11:00: KS OL Board & Committee Meeting: Topeka Rescue Mission, [600 N Kansas Ave.](http://www.ksol.org), Topeka