



MCFRS Special Operations 5 Minute Drill MCFRS Rail Liaison Team

Dangers of At Grade Railroad Crossing

- The tragic events recently with a Florida fire apparatus being struck by an oncoming train at a crossing, necessitates the reminder of the dangers presented by an at grade crossings – [Video link](#)
- A "at grade railroad crossing" is a point where a road intersects railroad tracks at the same level, meaning the road and the tracks are on the same elevation, with no bridge or tunnel separating them; essentially, a place where a vehicle must cross directly over the train tracks to continue on the road; also called a "level crossing" in some regions.
 - Guarded crossing having a person directing traffic at the crossings and unguarded crossing require the traffic to rely on signs and warning signals
- **Know your area.** Montgomery County has numerous at grade railroad crossings. These crossings should be avoided when enroute to an incident, as a train on that track, at the crossing could delay your response by over 10 minutes.
- Never attempt to go around crossing arms or ignore signals on at grade crossings, as these are indications a train is coming. Modern trains travel much faster and quieter than most would assume.



MCFRS Policy 808 and the PSTA Driver Training Program requires:

- Stops at unguarded crossings
- Approach guarded crossings with skepticism
- Stop, look, and listen in both directions
- Turn audible devices off, roll down windows, turn 4 ways on
- Trains may travel in either direction on all tracks
- Wait a moment to proceed after a train passes
- Never park or stop on train tracks
- More than one railroad or agency may operate on a set of tracks
- Halting train traffic may be difficult

Trains can move on any track, in any direction, at any time

Never assume a train is not coming because one just went by or because you are outside of the train's normal schedule