



## Railway Safety

During the spring, summer and fall months, many adults and children are out walking or riding their bicycles. Most will encounter a railway crossing in their travels.

When you see the flashing lights at a railway crossing, the most important thing to remember is STOP. Don't try to out run the gates. They are there to protect you. In the 18 years I have worked on the railway, I have yet to see the gates fail to go down when a train is approaching a crossing.

Brockville has 6 level crossings on the CN mainline inside the city limits. There are 2 mainline tracks. Trains can travel on either track, in either direction at any time. If you are stopped at a crossing and the train has passed but the gates have not raised, don't think the gates are broken. They are not. There is another train on the other track that you can't see or hear because of the train that has just passed. Wait until the gates raise completely and the lights stop flashing before you cross the tracks.

Many people have been seen using the CN mainline as an east-west short-cut through the city. This is very dangerous because you will have trains approaching you from behind.

Trains bridges and tunnels are another concern. They are designed and built just big enough for a train, not a train and a person. Stopping a train quickly is impossible. The average freight train that runs through Brockville weighs between 7,000 and 11,000 tons. A fully loaded grain train can weigh up to 14,000 tons. Just for comparison, an empty school bus weighs only about 13 tons.

When the Locomotive Engineer knows that he or she is required to stop at a certain location, he or she starts slowing down 3 to 4 miles away. If the train crew sees something on the track in front of them it is too late. The only thing they can do is make an emergency application, hold on, and watch.

This is something they will live with for the rest of their lives.

By DAN WILSON,  
Locomotive Engineer, CN Rail, Brockville.