

NCTCOG FACT SHEET

September 2021

QUICK TAKE

What:

Regional freight safety initiatives are developed to create a safer environment for bicyclists and pedestrians, commuters, first responders, commercial motor vehicle operators and anyone else traveling on North Texas roadways.

Significance:

Trucks and freight trains take longer to stop than passenger vehicles, making it important for motorists to use caution when encountering them.

By the Numbers:

500+

The number of truck lane restriction miles in Dallas-Fort Worth. Currently, 34 municipalities in the region have such restrictions. Following these rules can make the roads safer for all drivers.

Regional Driver Awareness is Key to Freight Safety

Highway Safety

North Texas sees an enormous volume of freight transported every day by semi-trucks and other commercial motor vehicles, supplying gasoline, medical supplies, building materials, groceries and more. If you own it, a truck probably moved it at some point.

In the past five years, there have been an average of 289 truck-involved crashes per month in North Texas. The number of crashes has increased each of those years. By understanding the importance of proper driving near and around trucks, navigating traffic will be safer, faster and more efficient. As the region's population continues to grow and freight traffic increases to supply the rising demand of consumer product deliveries, the potential for roadway incidents between automobiles and commercial motor vehicles increases. Many passenger vehicle drivers do not realize that these vehicles have "blind spots," where the truck driver cannot see passing vehicles.

Heavy-duty vehicles can be difficult to maneuver, and the length of time needed to stop is about 40% greater than cars. Truck drivers can also help make the roads safer by following the truck lane restrictions, which limit the lanes used by trucks on certain freeway corridors throughout the region.

In these areas, trucks with three or more axles are prohibited from using the inside left lane, except when passing traffic. This eases congestion and reduces the number of truck-related crashes on the freeways. Learn more at www.FreightNTX.org.



Photo: Getty Images

Safe Driving Habits

Efficient delivery of freight requires drivers of passenger vehicles and trucks to remain aware of one another. By following a few simple tips, they can help ensure goods are delivered to their destinations safely and on time, whether they are being delivered across town or to another region.

General Public

- Keep calm and truck on. Deliveries never stop.
- Road safety is a shared responsibility. Give space when needed.
- Trucks can't stop on a dime. Big rigs need more time.
- Trucks bring the goods every day. To get there safely stay back when traveling behind a truck.
- No Zones are blind spots for trucks. Use caution around these areas.
- Give trucks extra space on the road to do their job. Road safety is a shared responsibility.

Truck Drivers

- The Dallas-Fort Worth region has over 500 miles of truck lane restrictions that improve the safe and efficient movement of freight.
- Thirty-four municipalities in the DFW area have truck lane restrictions.

Rail Safety

Do not assume you can hear a train coming. Modern locomotives are much quieter than people think and there are quiet zones established at many of the regional crossings. This means as a train approaches a crossing, it is not required to blow its horn. Always assume a train is coming when approaching a crossing and look both ways. Trains travel much faster than they appear to and can take up to a mile to stop. Do not try to outrun a train.

North Texas has a vast rail network that supports three major freight railroads, two short-line railroads, Amtrak, light rail and commuter rail. This creates large train volumes and provides the region with goods movement and public transportation services.

Nationally, about every three hours, a person or vehicle is hit by a train. NCTCOG is working with Operation Lifesaver to improve safety near railroad tracks. Railroad tracks are private property, and it is illegal to be on or near them except at designated crossings. It is important for North Texans to follow proper safety precautions near the region's 2,900 plus at-grade crossings and remember the train always has the right-of-way.

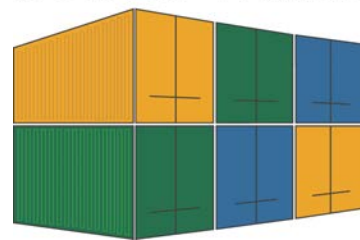
The region has seen a steady decline in incidents at rail crossings since 67 were reported in 2000. In 2020, there were only 31, highlighting a downward trend due to proper precautions and safety initiatives. To continue this important safety trend, drivers and pedestrians should heed safety signals and warnings. Learn more at www.FreightNTX.org.

Safe Rail Crossing Habits

- Freight trains don't travel at fixed times. Always expect a train at each at-grade crossing intersection at any time.
- Today's trains are quieter than ever. Any approaching train is always closer and moving faster than you think.
- Pass through a highway-rail grade crossing only if you are sure you can completely clear the crossing without stopping.
- Wait to cross until you can see clearly in both directions. Multiple tracks may mean multiple trains.

Cross a train track only at a designated crossing. It's the only safe and legal place to do so. Anything else is trespassing and could prove fatal.

**FREIGHT
NORTH TEXAS**



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Contact Us | 817-695-9240 | transinfo@nctcog.org @NCTCOGtrans

