

# Farmers & Farming Contractors

• AGRICULTURAL USERS •

## The Safe Use of Unattended Railway Level Crossings



**SEE TRACKS? THINK TRAIN!**

2024

 Iarnród Éireann  
Irish Rail

AT LEVEL CROSSINGS

# Stop, Look, Listen

Always close gates after use

## THE RAIL CROSS CODE

Use the **Rail Cross Code** each time you cross:

### ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN!

#### Stop, look both ways and listen

- **Stop** – behind the White line or Black & Yellow markers where provided.
- **Look both ways** – watching for the lights of approaching trains.
- **Listen for a train horn** - no radio, no earbuds or headphones!
- Give way to trains – let any approaching train pass, then look both ways again.
- When the railway line is clear, cross quickly. Never stop on the railway line.
- Close the level crossing gates after use – it's the law.

## Dos ✓

- Always expect a train
- Always use the Rail Cross Code at unattended railway crossings
- Always obey road signs and markings, and train warning lights
- Always switch off music systems and put away mobile phones
- Always control children and animals in your care
- Always dismount if you are a cyclist or horse rider
- Always shut and fasten the level crossing gates after crossing the railway line

## Always close gates after use – it's the law



## Don'ts X

- Don't use railway signals to determine if a train is or is not approaching
- Don't drive onto the railway line until you can ensure sufficient clearance on the other side
- Don't automatically follow a vehicle across the railway level crossing – always **stop, look and listen**
- Don't stop on the railway level crossing
- Don't overtake another vehicle on or when approaching the railway crossing
- Don't play the radio, or wear hoods or headphones, on or near the railway line

# Knowing the Dangers

- Trains travel fast and cannot stop suddenly.
- Shut and fasten all level crossing gates at all times. Leaving gates open can result in children or animals accessing on to the railway line and may encourage unsuspecting drivers of vehicles to proceed on to the level crossing before checking that it is safe to do so.
- When crossing the railway line with slow, heavy, low-slung or cumbersome vehicles, vehicles conveying dangerous substances and with herds of animals you must ring the Freephone number displayed on safety signage at the level crossing.
- Trains can be very quiet and this is particularly the case on modern rails.
- The use of earbuds or headphones and the use of radios will affect your ability to hear approaching trains. Remember the wearing of ear protectors will also affect your ability to hear trains. Mobile phones must not be used during the process of using the level crossing.
- Be aware that weather conditions such as mist, fog, or snow may affect your ability to see approaching trains.
- During the hours of darkness, take extra caution when checking for approaching trains as it might be possible to confuse train headlights with car headlights if there is a roadway parallel to the railway line.
- Every time you cross the railway, remember the **Rail Cross Code**.

When crossing, follow the instructions given on signage displayed at the level crossing, or if in doubt, contact Iarnród Éireann on Freephone number provided


## Driving Tractors across the Railway Line



- **Open** at least one window (driver's side) before crossing the railway line.
- **Turn off** all radios or stereos and remove any earbuds or headphones. Noise may mask the sound of an approaching train. Mobile phones must not be used during the process of working the level crossing.
- Remember the wearing of ear protectors will reduce your ability to hear trains. Protectors should be removed before crossing the railway line.

### **Make sure that**

- the tractor, including trailer, is in good mechanical condition and unlikely to stall on the level crossing.
- the handbrake is in good working order.
- the cab windows are not fogged up inside and that all windows are clear of snow, ice and dirt and that nothing is blocking your view.

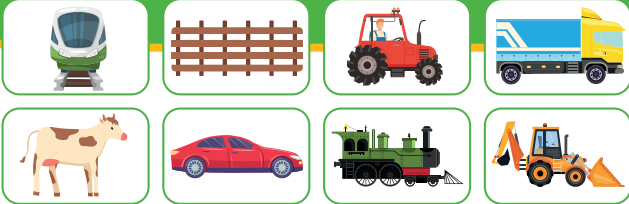
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- Ensure that no tow-hitch or other attachment will foul the railway line as you traverse the level crossing.
  - Always stop behind the white stop line, stop sign, or black & yellow markers where provided.

• **Stop** clear of the railway line to ensure a good view along the track in both directions. **Look** for the approach of trains, especially in poor visibility or at night. **Listen** for horns or the sound of an approaching train.

- Always stop your vehicle behind the stop signs, stop lines or the black and yellow marker posts, where provided. Make sure that equipment, such as buckets, grabs, forks attached to the front of the tractor does not protrude beyond the marked posts / stop lines.
- Great care must be taken when driving a tractor which is carrying a load. A number of dangers may arise. When going down a slope towards the railway line or when travelling over a change in gradient, the load could shift and fall off. The load may fall on to the railway line, obstructing it.
- If your vehicle stalls or drops part of its load, or in any other way causes an obstruction of the crossing, immediately contact Iarnród Éireann on the Freephone number displayed on safety signage so that any approaching trains can be warned.
- If in doubt, ring the Freephone number displayed on the red and yellow safety signage for further information.
- When checking for the approach of a train, make sure that your load is not obstructing the railway line. Make sure the front loader and all associated equipment is positioned behind the white stop line, stop signage, black & yellow marker.

- Should a vehicle suffer a breakdown or become grounded on the level crossing, make sure all vehicle occupants exit the vehicle and clear the railway line immediately to a point of safety. Then contact Iarnród Éireann on the Freephone number found on signage **immediately**.
- Having used the level crossing, always close the gates after you – **it's the law. Failure to shut and fasten the gates is dangerous and you could be prosecuted.**

## Unusual Movements across Railway Level Crossings



Contact Iarnród Éireann beforehand on the Freephone number displayed on the safety signs at the level crossing if you are:

- Driving an awkward vehicle – for example, a long, low, wide, heavy or slow vehicle
- Moving vehicles with dangerous, unusual or very heavy loads

If you are driving a very high vehicle and using a railway crossing with overhead electrified lines, such as on the DART network, please note that the general safe head-room is 5 metres.

## How to Herd Animals Safely across the Railway

- You must ring Iarnród Éireann, on the Freephone number displayed on the safety signs, for permission to cross with animals. In the case of herding animals, the movement must be preplanned and permission to cross the line must be obtained from Iarnród Éireann, in advance and in good time. Please quote the level crossing number displayed at the crossing to the Iarnród Éireann signaller when planning the movement of animals.
- Where provided, use the holding pens adjacent to the railway level crossing.
- If you are crossing the railway line with herds of animals, you must have adequate assistance to ensure the safe movement of the herd across the railway level crossing.
- Never attempt to start a movement of animals across the railway line unless you know that you can complete it or curtail it safely and in time. Information on train movements, and permission in advance, as required, may be obtained from Iarnród Éireann, see Freephone number displayed at level crossings.
- If an animal or animals stray or escape on to the railway line either through a gap in a fence or by means of an open gate always contact Iarnród Éireann on the Freephone number found on safety signage displayed at the level crossing immediately.



This must be done before any attempt is made to recover the animals. Permission must be obtained from the Iarnród Éireann signaller and a clear understanding that trains have been stopped before you go onto the railway line. **Do not place yourself in a position of Danger.**



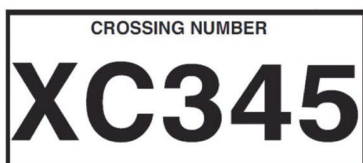
## Driving Slow, Heavy, Low-Slung and Cumbersome Vehicles across the Railway

- You must obtain permission to cross the railway line from Iarnród Éireann in advance and in good time. You should advise the type of vehicle you intend bringing across the line and you should also advise the likely duration of the movement as special arrangements may have to be made for the safe use of the level crossing. Always advise Iarnród Éireann by contacting them on the Freephone number found on signage when the level crossing has been safely traversed.
- **Never** attempt to cross the railway with a vehicle which may ground on the railway line. You could cause a **serious accident**. You may also cause delays to train services while the problem is being resolved.
- Safe passage with an unladen trailer does not guarantee a trouble-free return journey, if the vehicle is laden.
- Make sure that the level crossing gates are sufficiently wide for the vehicle to pass without becoming jammed and without damaging either the gates or their supports.
- Any damage must be reported immediately to Iarnród Éireann by using the Freephone number displayed at the railway level crossing, or by referring to the contact details on Page 12 of this booklet.

## Farm Activities such as Silage Making, Hay Making and Harvesting, etc., necessitating Repeated Movements across the railway



- If you intend undertaking an activity, such as silage making, involving repeated movements of vehicles across the railway, then you should make prior arrangements with Iarnród Éireann to have special protection provided. Give at least 48 hours notice.
- No such movements may take place across the railway until the special protection, which could involve the provision of an Iarnród Éireann flagman, is in place. All instructions given by the flagman must be fully obeyed at all times in relation to the crossing of the line.
- If you employ outside contractors to carry out work of any kind on your land that will require crossing the railway line, then the above arrangements must apply, and it is your responsibility to ensure that the contractor is fully aware of the safety requirements at the crossing. Supply the contractor with a copy of this booklet. The crossing of members of the public at field to field crossings is not allowed as it is not a normal agricultural activity.
- State the identification number (crossing number) shown at the railway crossing.

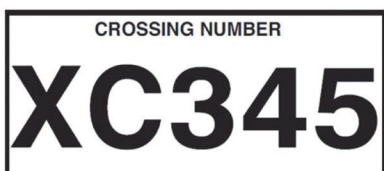


***This identification number is different for each railway crossing***

## Emergencies at Railway Level Crossings

If an animal strays onto the railway line, or if a wheelchair, bicycle or other vehicle gets stuck on the railway line, you must take the following actions:

- Get clear of the railway, leaving the animal, wheelchair, bicycle or vehicle where it is,
- Move everyone well clear of the railway line,
- Contact Iarnród Éireann using the Freephone number which you will find on the instruction sign at the entrance to the railway level crossing, say 'This is an Emergency', and
- State the identification number (crossing number) shown at the railway crossing.



***This identification number is different for each railway crossing***



# ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN

## CONTACT US

This brochure can be downloaded from our website [www.irishrail.ie](http://www.irishrail.ie).

For enquiries regarding the level crossing you use, or reporting damage to a level crossing infrastructure, contact the relevant Infrastructure Manager in your area:

**Emergency CTC (Central Traffic Control)**

**01 855 5454**

### ATHLONE

*Covers the West of the country*

**090 648 7711**

### DUBLIN

*Covers the North, East and South East of the country*

**01 703 3651**

### LIMERICK JUNCTION

*Covers the South and South West of the country*

**062 51083**



## SEE TRACKS? THINK TRAIN!

Irish language version of this information safety booklet downloadable from Iarnród Éireann website via QR Code



At selected Iarnród Éireann level crossings, this system has been installed. Further details are available by viewing or downloading a booklet from the Iarnród Éireann website (via QR code)



# TRAIN DETECTION WARNING SYSTEM

**RED**  
Do Not  
Cross

**ORANGE**  
Cross With  
Caution



**ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN**



# ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN

**STOP CLEAR OF RAILWAY  
LEVEL CROSSING**

**OPEN BOTH GATES BEFORE CROSSING**

**WHEN THE RAILWAY LINE IS CLEAR,  
CROSS QUICKLY**

**REMEMBER  
NEVER EVER STOP ON THE RAILWAY LINE  
AND ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN**

**Emergency CTC (Central Traffic Control)  
01 855 5454**



- **ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN**
- **CROSS SAFELY**
- **ALWAYS SHUT THE GATES AFTER YOU**



**Iarnród Éireann  
Irish Rail**

## NOTES

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