



State Coordinator

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Illinois' Collision Stats Plummet

Illinois has historically had a high incident rate for railroad involved collisions, related to both grade crossings and trespassers. Illinois has always been rated as one of the top three states. I don't want to make excuses, but Illinois and the Chicago metro area is at the center of it all, when you talk about railroads. This area has more track miles, more railroads and more traffic than almost any other state. In 2009 all the hard work that

Illinois has done with Operation Lifesaver and Railroad Safety has showed itself in a historic reduction in collisions overall. Railroad involved collisions at public crossings were the lowest they have ever been since records have been kept. Granted the economy and railroad traffic are down, which will cause the interaction between the public and trains to be lower, but collisions are down at a much greater percentage than are train

miles traveled. Traffic is down 25% from 2008 to 2009 but collisions were down 43%. In 2008 there were 129 collisions at public grade crossings and in 2009 there were only 78. Illinois had never dropped below 100 collisions before. Steve Laffey from the ICC reports that in 2009 Illinois was 3rd when considering all classified collisions, but 5th, in collisions at public crossings.

CN, Illinois OL & Indiana OL Team Up For Safety

Each February, the CN sponsors an Operation Lifesaver New Presenter Class in South Holland, Illinois. This year the CN came up with a wonderful way to build relations between states and spread the OL safety message across state lines. On February 16th OL trainers, state coordinators, railroad personnel, firemen and policemen from both Illinois and Indiana descended on the Tri Town Safety Village in Schererville Indiana for an

Operation Lifesaver New Presenter Class. It was one of the largest classes I ever remember teaching. In the afternoon the class had to be split in half for the 10 minute presentations so the class could be completed before the end of the day.

The event was very successful and the location was outstanding. If you have not had an opportunity to visit the Tri Town Safety Village I would recommend you find time to visit the facility. It is located at

1350 Eagle Ridge Drive, Schererville, IN 46375-1360, or call for more information, (219) 865-9600. If you have any questions contact Eric Graf of the CN Police how is very involved at the safety village and can answer all your questions.



“Meet a Presenter” Board Vice Pres. Tom McNamara



ILOL Vice President Tom McNamara teaches a presenter class in Indiana

As of March 30, 2010 Tom McNamara will have been working for a railroad for 30 years. Tom is 50 years old, and is married to his wife Barbe, whom he met 20 years ago, during one of his train rides. He has a 25 year old daughter named Jessica from his first marriage who lives with his father in Belvidere, IL. Tom started in railroading in 1980 with the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad. As an Engineer Tom hit his first car in 1981, which blew up from the impact of

the train. His last incident was a 12 year old Boy playing along the tracks. In August of 1987 Tom started with Metra as a Conductor and started as a full time OL Presenter in 1996. In 2005, Tom was elected to the ILOL Board and in 2009 became Vice President. In 2008 he became a Presenter Trainer, although his heart is still in doing OL presentations. Tom has done over 10,000 presentations since 1996. In his off time he enjoys time with his family at his

lake house in Wisconsin and using one of his many toys (boat, or jet skis). Tom and Barbe run the activities in their gated community in Wisconsin, which is hard to believe considering Tom is normally so shy. “The reason I Love Operation Lifesaver, is that I feel we are doing some good as a TEAM, and it shows with our work and our stats”, Tom reflected. “Keep up the good work and if you need anything please don’t hesitate to call.”

ILOL Produces a PSA Video “A Knock on the Door”



To obtain a copy of the PSA “A Knock on the Door” contact Chip Pew.

The film, [A Knock on the Door](#) (3 minutes, 15 seconds), was made in Illinois in late 2009 in the north suburb of Highland Park. The story unfolds as two police officers are assigned the unpleasant task of having to make notification to the parents of a child that has been killed in a train vs. vehicle collision. The anxiety and uneasiness of this call is felt throughout, and as my son put it, police officers are real people too, with feelings. The

contributions of Off. Bill Lyons and Lt. Ray Fisher of the Villa Park Police Dept. were vital to the film’s success. Having real police officers engaging in real police activities made the story believable because they have experienced making notifications for real. Bill was quoted as saying, “it’s the most heart wrenching part of the job as a police officer.” The film is designed for the young adult or new driver audience and is a

departure from the traditional safety film in that, we aren’t instructing the viewers on what to do and what not to do. It’s more of a cerebral approach, dealing with the consequences of their actions. After seeing the film, people will think about how this scenario would affect their loved ones and the suffering they would endure. If it makes them think about it the next time or every time they come up to the tracks then we’ve accomplished our goal.

Grade Crossing Collision Investigation Course

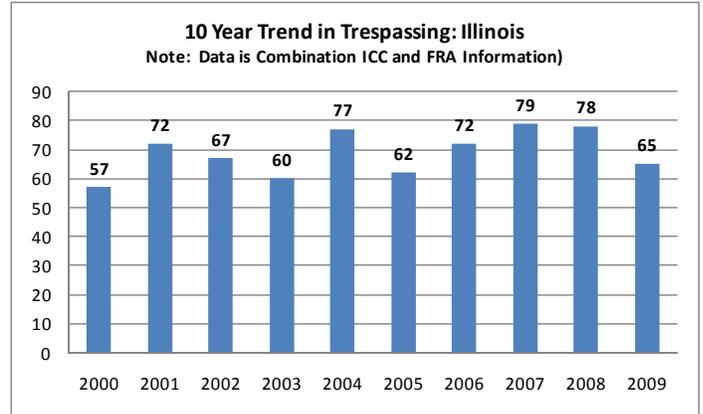
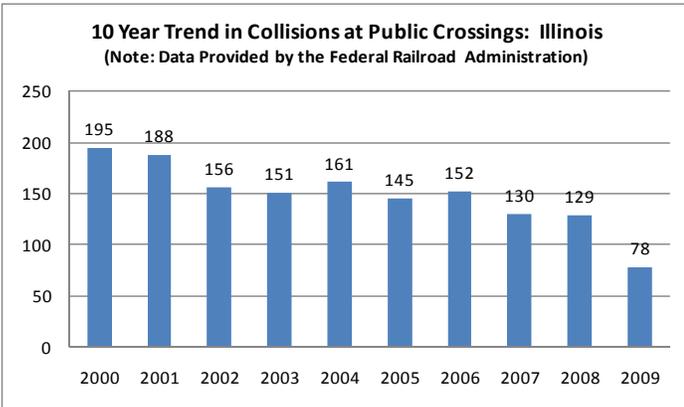
Illinois Operation Lifesaver has recently added a couple of trainers for the Grade Crossing Collision Investigation Course (GCCCI), and is starting to offer classes in Illinois. A class was scheduled for April 6th at the Elmhurst Police Dept but there was such an overwhelming

response, the class was almost immediately filled and a second date for June 10th is pending which is also already full. For those that don’t know this is a class that is generally directed toward law enforcement officers and it gives them the training and in some cases hands

on knowledge they would need to investigate a railroad involved collision. Classes are presented in 3 different formats, 4, 8 and 16 hours. Watch the newsletter or contact Jim Kveton if you have interest in attending a future class or sponsoring one.

Illinois Railroad Safety Stats for 2009

2009 was the "safest" year ever in Illinois in terms of collisions at public highway-rail grade crossings. A record low total of 78 collisions occurred, that resulted in 16 fatalities and 31 injuries. 2009's total of 78 collisions is a 40% decrease over the 2008 total of 129.



Unfortunately, trespassing incidents (including suicides) remained pretty much at the 10-year average with 65 reported incidents and the 10-year average being 69 incidents per year. In 2009, there were 39 fatal trespassing incidents and 26 injuries. Of these, 17 deaths were believed to have been apparent suicides and three injuries that appeared to be apparent suicide attempts.

Region	Killed	%	Injured	%
Cook County	22	56.4%	10	38.5%
Other 5 Collar Counties	9	23.1%	3	11.5%
Rest of Illinois	8	20.5%	13	50.0%
Total	39	100.0%	26	100.0%

Upcoming Classes and Meetings (Save These Dates)

During 2010 there will be no shortage of classes or meetings related to Operation Lifesaver and Railroad Safety in general. Besides plans to hold Grade Crossing Collision Investigation (GCCII) courses there are plans for several Operation Lifesaver Presenter training classes. All the dates are not yet set but watch the Illinois OL Newsletter for information on upcoming events. During the year there will also be the quarterly Illinois Operation Lifesaver

meetings, (see page 6 for those meeting dates) the International Operation Lifesaver Symposium and the DuPage Railroad Safety Councils biennial conference. All promise to have very worthwhile agendas.

March 20th, 8:30am – 10:30am
 DuPage Railroad Safety Council Meeting @ **Hinsdale Hospital**

April 6th 8am - 4pm
 Grade Crossing Collision Investigation (GCCII) @ **Elmhurst Police Dept.**

April 15th 8am - 4pm
 New Presenter Class @ **Elmhurst Police Dept.**

April 26th, 8am – 4pm
 New Presenter Class @ **Elmhurst Police Dept.**

Aug. 30th – Sep. 1st
 International Operation Lifesaver Symposium @ Baltimore, Maryland
for more info see www.oli.org

Sep. 29th, 8am - 4pm
 DuPage Railroad Safety Council Conference
Oakbrook, (Hamburger University)

For Registration Information Contact State Coordinator Chip Pew or Jim Kveton

ILOL Hitting the Bars for Safety



On March 9th, at the ILOL general meeting, Sheldon Soldwisch, Engineer for the Union Pacific Railroad, advised the membership of his efforts to spread the OL safety message to customers of some liquor establishments. He had started his efforts in the area and towns surrounding Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. It is no secret that impaired drivers are

more likely to make poor decisions and perhaps become involved in a collision, which can result in property damage, injuries and in some cases even a death. This is true for drivers as well as pedestrians. Sheldon showed the OL meeting attendees posters and drink coasters that were produced by the Union Pacific Railroad. The coasters were designed

with a Railroad Safety Message printed on them directed toward young people that frequent bars. CSX RR is also doing something similar with drink coasters being given to bar goers from an OL program called "Common Sense". Several other communities related problems with college age individuals under the influence around tracks.

ILOL Offering Grants for 2010 Symposium

ILOL has again decided to offer grants to its members to assist them in attending the International Operation Lifesaver Symposium that is being held in Baltimore, Maryland, Aug 30-Sep 1. At the March ILOL Board Meeting it was decided that four \$300.00 grants will be offered to ILOL

members to help pay for lodging expenses at the Symposium. Those that are interested in applying for the grant, should send an e-mail or letter to ILOL President Ken Gilsdorf by May 1, 2010 explaining:
(1) Why they are interested in attending the Symposium,
(2) Why they think

attending would assist them in the OL mission and
(3) Why they should be selected to receive one of the grants.
 The grant money will be paid directly to the hotel to help offset lodging expenses. For more information contact Ken Gilsdorf or Chip Pew.

Illinois OL Enforcement Committee Members Meet

On February 2, 2010, after the PEERS meeting that was held at the Elmhurst Police Department the Illinois OL Enforcement Committee had an important kick off type meeting. At the end of the year meeting in December the ILOL Board decided to place a board member on each committee as a Liaison, to assist the three committees with direction, motivation and activities throughout the year. During the first meeting of the Enforcement Committee Tony Quarto

and Eric Graf were selected to head up the committee. The first thing they started working on was drafting a mission statement. The mission statement that was presented to the OL board was;
It shall be the mission of this committee to actively and aggressively enforce all laws enacted to safeguard motorists and pedestrians around highway-rail grade crossings and their

rights of way. This committee will encourage and educate local law enforcement with enforcement efforts; participate in and provide opportunities for safety and traffic blitzes, and save lives through comprehensive enforcement efforts designed to reduce collisions and fatalities pertaining to the transportation of people and goods via the rail industry.

Illinois Operation Lifesaver Enforcement Committee starts with a mission and direction for the coming year.

PEERS Update

The Public Education and Enforcement Research Study (aka PEERS) is about to enter its Seventh Phase. The ICC recently learned that the Federal Railroad Administration is going to make available another \$480,000 later in 2010. Currently, there are 37 communities, railroads, and non-profit organizations participating in Phase 6 that is running until December 31, 2010. Three communities extended their Phase 5 agreements and two more communities received additional left-over grant funds from Phase 3 of the PEERS program. In total, 42 grants with a total value of slightly more than \$500,000 are actively underway in Illinois. The PEERS program is one of the reasons that Illinois was able to achieve the great success of 2009. More news on how to apply for Phase 7 grant funds will appear as it becomes available.

ENS Signs

By April of 2010, all public highway-rail crossings in Illinois are required to have emergency notification signs installed. It is the responsibility of the railroad to have these signs installed. While the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices suggests a standard sign, railroads can (and do) use a variety of signs. The ICC can also provide data directly to your local dispatch center including crossing ownership, contact information and train count data that can easily be attached to a latitude/longitude value for input into computer assisted dispatching (CAD) systems. Pictured to the right are a few varieties of ENS signs.



Registration is Now Open for the 16th International OL Symposium

The 16th International Operation Lifesaver Symposium has been set for August 29 thru September 1, 2010. The International OL Symposium is held every two years in different parts of the country and includes training sessions for Presenters, Presenter Trainers, GCCI Instructors, State Coordinators and other OL volunteers.

As of March 18, 2010, registration for the 16th International Symposium is open. The event will be held at

the Hyatt Regency Baltimore Inner Harbor in Baltimore Maryland. It is recommended that everyone make their hotel reservations early because once all rooms are taken, participants will have to stay at off site hotels that may have higher nightly rates. Go to the Hyatt Regency website for reservation information:

<http://baltimore.hyatt.com/hyatt/hotels/>

To register for the symposium, to review the current agenda, scheduled events or costs go to the following

OL website,

http://oli.org/events/egroup_detail.php?group_id=23

This years Symposium promises to be a very worthwhile event. There are sessions related to International Programs, Public Service Announcements, Safe Routes to Schools and other Enforcement, Education, and Engineering topics. A Baltimore Orioles Baseball Game, and dinner at the Aquarium have also been scheduled as after hours events.

Members of OL at the 15th International Symposium in Cincinnati Ohio in 2008



Illinois Operation Lifesaver

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See us at:

www.oli.org

or

www.icc.illinois.gov/LOL

Illinois Operation Lifesaver 2010 Meeting Schedule

Illinois Operation Lifesaver North:

June 15th, (8AM Board, 10:30AM general) Elmhurst Police Dept.

Sept. 28st, (8AM Board, 10:30AM general) Elmhurst Police Dept.

Dec. 14th, (8AM Board, 10:30AM general) Elmhurst City Hall

Illinois Operation Lifesaver South:

June 1st, (10AM general meeting) Municipal West Training Building

Sept. 7th, (10AM general meeting) Municipal West Training Building

Dec. 7th, (10AM general meeting) Municipal West Training Building

Elmhurst Police Dept., 125 E. First Street, Elmhurst, IL 60126 (630) 530-3050

Elmhurst City Hall, 209 N. York Street, Elmhurst, IL 60126 (630) 530-3000

Municipal West Training Building, 200 Potomac Blvd., Mount Vernon, IL 62864

Contacting Your Illinois Operation Lifesaver Board By Email

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Submitting Articles, Pictures or Information For The Newsletter

Illinois Operation Lifesaver is always looking for information, articles, and pictures to be added to and shared through our Newsletter. If you have any information about up coming

events, classes, conferences or anything else that would benefit other OL volunteers, please forward them in by email. We also like to share in the successes of our volunteers

and OL at large, so include things we can celebrate also. We will include as many as we can. Forward all submissions to james.kveton@elmhurst.org

“Lighten Up Francis”



“And Don't forget to SMILE”