Operation Lifesaver, Inc., a non-profit organization founded in 1972 and dedicated to rail safety public education, has partnered with federal safety agencies and the nation’s railroads to launch the See Tracks? Think Train! campaign aimed at raising awareness about risky pedestrian and driver behavior around railroad tracks.

A person or vehicle is struck by a train roughly once every three hours.

Preliminary Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) data show:

- 908 pedestrians were injured or killed while walking on or near railroad tracks in 2013, up 7.7 percent from 843 in 2012.
- 1193 people were injured or killed at railroad grade crossings, up 1.5 percent from 1175 in 2012.
- Learn more about trespassing or grade crossing statistics in your state.

From those trespassing on railroad tracks for a shortcut or recreation, or drivers trying to beat the train at a grade crossing, people don’t realize important facts about safe behavior around rail tracks:

- A typical freight train can take more than a mile to stop, even when emergency brakes are applied – the distance of 18 football fields!
- It’s never safe to stop closer than 15 feet from rails, and a train is at least three feet wider than tracks on both sides.
- 95 percent of all rail-related deaths involve drivers trying to beat a train, or people trespassing on railroad tracks.
- More than 50 percent of people injured or killed while trespassing on railroad tracks have drugs or alcohol in their system.
- Railroad tracks are private property, and walking on them trespassing, illegal and dangerous, risking being ticketed and fined, seriously injured or killed.
- Link to more: driving safety tips, pedestrian safety tips, and passenger rail safety tips.

The campaign includes public service announcement, or PSA elements that reinforce to the public that when you match yourself or vehicle up against a train, “It’s No Contest.”

- Based on a boxing theme, relevant to a key 18-35 year-old male campaign target audience, the attention-grabbing television ads convey how a person walking on railroad tracks is no contender when matched up with a train.
- The campaign includes bi-lingual PSA ads that will air on TV and radio, and print ads to be displayed throughout transit stations, on highway billboards and other areas to attract attention.
- Campaign partners include the Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and Association of American Railroads.
- For downloadable creative elements, including infographics, PSAs, posters and more visit www.SeeTracksThinkTrain.org.

Education and outreach is key to saving lives, and the See Tracks? Think Train! PSAs will be supplemented with ongoing education efforts of Operation Lifesaver’s 50-state network of volunteers who work with the public through events at schools, with law enforcement, first responders, professional drivers and community organizations. For more information about Operation Lifesaver, visit www.oli.org.

SeeTracksThinkTrain.org