

continued from inside

## Drivers

### Don't Shortcut Life ... driving your car

As you approach a railroad crossing, look and listen for trains. Make sure there is enough room for your vehicle to completely clear the tracks before you start to drive across. If you're not sure if there is enough room, wait. Trains overhang the rails by at least three feet.

Never go around lowered crossing gates or cross tracks when warning lights are flashing. It's against the law - and it's dangerous. Every year hundreds of people in the United States die because they ignored the crossing gates and tried to beat the train across the tracks. Don't become a statistic.

If your vehicle stalls on a crossing, get everyone out of the car and away from the tracks immediately. If you can see a train coming, run in the opposite direction of the train and away from the tracks. If you do not see a train coming, move away from the vehicle and call 911.

School and transit buses carrying passengers, as well as trucks carrying hazardous materials, are required to stop at all rail crossings. Be prepared to stop if you are following one of these vehicles.

### Watch out for a second train

At most places on the rail line, Caltrain has at least two tracks. Be alert for trains coming on either track. When you see the last car of a passing train, wait for it to clear the crossing to be sure no other trains are coming on another track.

Remember that not all trains operate on a set schedule. In addition to Caltrain, freight and maintenance trains run on our tracks, and you may never know when the next one will be coming. Trains can run on either track, in either direction ... around tracks, always expect a train.

### Which end of the train is the front?

On Caltrain, southbound trains usually have a locomotive in the front to pull the train. Northbound trains are usually pushed by the locomotive, which is operated remotely from the northernmost car, called the "cab car." This system is called "push-pull," and it is used by many commuter railroads. However, there are times when the "usual" won't apply. Trains can travel in either direction on either track.

Always be sure to look carefully to see which direction the train is moving. And remember that the cab car end is quieter than the locomotive, so you might not hear it coming.

Caltrain - It's almost two stories tall, weighs 375 tons, has flashing lights and takes up to a half-mile to stop. Please stay out of its way.

## Rail Safety Presentations

In partnership with Operation Lifesaver, Caltrain's Public Information Department offers rail safety presentations for people of all age groups, especially students.

These presentations teach individuals how to approach the rail system safely, gain a better understanding of rail hazards and avoid risky behavior. The presentation includes slides and videos and can be customized to meet time constraints. A minimum of 30 minutes is needed to cover the basic issues.

For more information or to schedule a presentation, call 650.508.7934.

**Transit Watch:** You can help keep the rails safe by reporting dangerous situations, such as children playing on the tracks or people hanging out along the rail right of way. Call our transit police at **1.877.SAF.RAIL (1.877.723.7245)** to report the situation, as well as any suspicious activity.

For more information on Caltrain, call  
**1.800.660.4287**  
**www.caltrain.com**

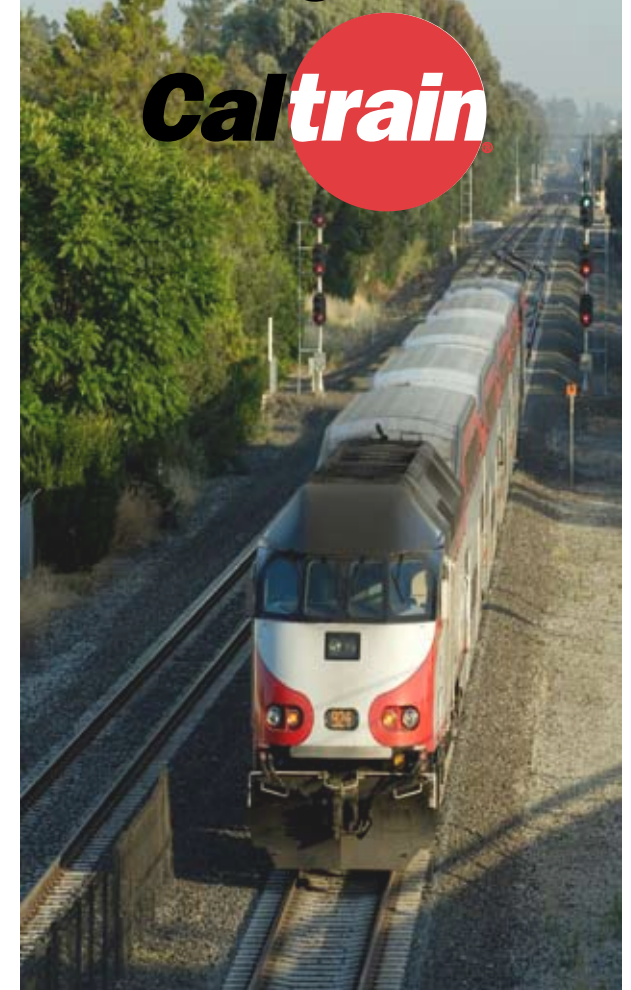
Public Information Department  
1250 San Carlos Ave.  
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306



5/08-10M-tcb-cc

# Don't Shortcut Life!

## A Rail Safety Message from



## Become Part of the Solution

Every day, Caltrain runs dozens of trips up and down the Peninsula, carrying people to work, to play and to many other destinations, safely and on time.

Trains have been on the Peninsula for more than 145 years, and many people who live and work in the area have come to take them for granted. They sometimes forget that trains can be very dangerous to anyone who doesn't follow the basic rules of rail safety.

We need everyone's cooperation – from passengers to people who live or work near the railroad – to understand rail safety and to behave safely around trains.

Caltrain's "Don't Shortcut Life" safety campaign focuses on education, engineering and enforcement. Since the campaign's inception, more than 10,000 community members have heard Caltrain's safety message.

Whether you're a passenger, a pedestrian or a driver, let this brochure be your "personal trainer" for being safe around Caltrain and other trains.

Photo  
courtesy  
of the  
San Mateo  
Daily News



*Pedestrian gates at station*

### Pedestrians

#### Don't Shortcut Life . . . at stations

When visiting any one of Caltrain's 32 stations, stand behind the yellow safety line as trains approach. Some trains express through stations without stopping. These trains can travel up to 79 mile per hour, so it's important for everyone to stay behind the safety line. At that speed, trains cover the length of a football field in less than three seconds. When you're at the station with children, keep them close to you at all times. And, please never sit on the edge of the platform while waiting for your train. All trains overhang the rails and require that space to operate.

#### . . . getting on a train

Please allow other passengers to get off before you attempt to board. Hold on to the handrails as you climb aboard, and watch your step.

#### . . . on board

Once on board Caltrain, find a seat and get comfortable. Passengers should never ride between cars or in the entrance/exit area, even if your trip is a short one.

If the train starts moving while you're still walking through the railcar, be prepared to brace yourself for sudden train movements. Handholds are provided throughout the passenger cars. And as you walk through the car, take a moment to become familiar with the locations of emergency exits.

#### . . . getting off a train

Always wait for the train to come to a complete stop, and when getting off, don't stand on the steps before the doors open. Never attempt to jump off a moving train.

#### . . . near tracks

Tracks are for trains. Stay off of them. Not only is it illegal to trespass on tracks, but it's very dangerous as well. They are no place for walkers or joggers and they should never be used as a shortcut. Always walk up to the nearest legal crossing. A train can pass through a crossing in less than a minute. It is better to lose one minute in life than your life in one minute.

Designated crossings are marked by signs or gates. If you're not using a designated crossing, you're trespassing on Caltrain's right of way. Although you're subject to citation and even a fine, the main reason to stay off the tracks is to stay safe.

You may think you're too smart to get hit by a train, but it is very hard to accurately judge a train's speed or distance. An optical illusion makes a train seem farther away and moving more slowly than it actually is. Do not take chances by trying to beat the train across the tracks. Wait at the crossing until the train has passed and it is safe to proceed. Trains can't stop quickly or swerve out of your way. It's up to you to stay out of a train's way.

Some people think it's fun to put coins or rocks on tracks and watch the train crush them. What many people do not know is that this can be very dangerous. The fast moving train can easily send those items flying forward, rather than crush them. The result could be a serious injury to anyone nearby. Throwing objects at a train also is dangerous. The train can knock the object right back at the person who threw it, harder and faster than it was thrown.

*Below: on left, a locomotive pulls a train; on the right, the cab car leads a train.*



*continued on back*