



SHARP START



September 29 — Never Park on the Tracks

Vehicle, with two contractors inside, was parked in the middle of the tracks, right next to flashing red lights, while rail cars were being moved in its direction.

I pointed out to them the flashing lights and how you don't park on tracks without an encroachment permit.

A vehicle with two contractors inside was parked in the middle of the railroad tracks, directly next to flashing red warning lights. At the same time, rail cars were being moved in the direction of the vehicle.

The flashing red lights were an indication that rail traffic was active in the area, yet the vehicle remained parked on the tracks. With two contractors inside the vehicle and rail cars moving toward them, this created a serious rail encroachment and struck-by hazard.

Warning systems are there to get our attention before we enter a hazardous area. In this case, the flashing red lights were already communicating that rail activity was occurring, yet the vehicle was still sitting on the tracks. We cannot become so familiar with an area that we stop recognizing the warnings around us. When a warning signal tells you to stay clear, take it seriously and get out of the danger zone.

Before driving or parking near railroad tracks, make sure you understand the site requirements and know whether an encroachment permit is required.

Hazards

- Rail car movement
- Struck by hazards
- Vehicle/rail collision
- Rail encroachment
- Limited escape options
- Failure to recognize warning signals

Words of Wisdom

Rail tracks are an active work area, not a place to wait or park. Respect the warning signals, follow the encroachment requirements, and always give moving rail equipment the space it needs.

Pause and Think

- Are you aware of the rail traffic around your work area?
- What do flashing red warning lights tell you?
- Are you parked or working within the required distance from the tracks?
- Do you have the proper encroachment permit when one is required?
- If rail cars begin moving, do you have a clear way to get out of the area?

Closing Thought

Never become so comfortable around railroad tracks that you forget what can happen when a train starts moving. Pay attention to the warning signals, follow the site requirements, and always give moving rail equipment the space it needs.

See Something • Say Something • Do Something