



Sunflower State Signal

Official Publication of Kansas Operation Lifesaver, Inc.

Coordinator's Corner



This time each year I analyze and share with you the data on incidents. This year when I sat down to gather the information I was met with a shock, the FRA had not updated the dashboards I use to gather this information since 2022.

I did find a data source on the FRA website, but it is greatly lacking in detail and clarity. I have provided the rough numbers I have on page 3. I will be honest, I do not know the timeframe in 2023 that these cover, I do not know if they include suicides or railroad contractors. I do know I had to do math, making me suspicious of the injury rate.

I have heard rumors of a new FRA tool launching and I am hopeful next year I will be able to provide you with counties, demographics, and numbers I am confident in again. I will update you with official numbers as soon as I have them. Until then use these as a ballpark figure.

Jessica Mays

jmays@kscapitol.com



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Millions Reached During RSW

Annual Rail Safety Week Report Released

WASHINGTON, DC, December 8, 2023 – A [new report](#) from rail safety education nonprofit Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) shows that this year's observance of [Rail Safety Week \(RSW\)](#), September 18-24, reached millions of people with lifesaving rail safety messaging through events and activities as well as news stories, digital media campaigns, social media and Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

Rail Safety Week is observed throughout North America each year, spearheaded by OLI, Operation Lifesaver Canada and the Mexican Association of Railroads (AMF). The goal of Rail Safety Week is to empower the public to make safe choices when driving or walking near railroad tracks and trains.

"A growing group of partners shared OLI materials and videos in support of Rail Safety Week, elevating the message and raising awareness," said OLI Executive Director Rachel Maleh. "OLI released a

suite of branded materials in addition to two new Stop Track Tragedies PSAs telling the stories of families affected by crossing and trespass incidents as well as engaging new transit safety education materials for children from Pre-K through age 12. We are incredibly grateful to all who shared the rail safety message during Rail Safety Week this year via social media and events – from state and local officials sharing Rail Safety Week proclamations, to law enforcement and first responder agencies participating in Operation Clear Track on September 19, to everyone wearing red showing support on #RedOutForRailSafety Day, September 23."

Maleh continued, "Once again, our Board of Directors, Operation Lifesaver State Programs, federal government and safety partners across the U.S.

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A Letter from the President

Dear KS OL supporters and volunteers,



First off, I wanted to give a big thanks to all of our Kansas volunteers, Board Members and State Coordinator for a great 2023. As we bring this year to a close, I want to bring attention to next year. 2024 is the 50th Anniversary for Kansas Operation Lifesaver. Kansas was the third state to become involved in the OL program.

Throughout the past 50 years, Kansas has been one of the leading programs across the country. We have some big things in the works to celebrate and we want to get everyone's help to make 2024 one to remember. One of my goals is to increase our volunteer base. My challenge to the volunteers is to recruit. Anyone that has a passion for railroads, safety and public interaction is who we are looking for. Expanding our volunteer base into railroad museums, model railroad clubs, driving schools and law enforcement are just some of the big areas. If you know of someone, please send them our way!

I also encourage anyone that has not attended one of the quarterly meetings to please do so. Attending is a great way to network with others and share ideas. On behalf of the Board of Directors, we look forward to working with everyone to have a great 50th Anniversary in 2024.

Sincerely,

Matt Vogt

Captain Matt Vogt
KS OL Board President
Valley Center Police Department

Board of Directors

Matt Vogt, President
Kansas Peace Officers' Association

Debbie Romine,
Vice President
Member at-Large

Mark Wasko
UP Representative, Secretary

Jim Yunker
BNSF Representative

Shawn Hennes
KS Dept of Transportation

Jesse Johnson
Kansas Highway Patrol

Loren Bradford
Shortline Representative

Norbert Angell
Member-at-Large

Ross Boelling
Member-at-Large

Amber Brown
Member-at-Large

UP COMING EVENTS

March 14th, 1:00 – 3:00: KS OL Board & Committee Meeting
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, Hughes Room 205
[1515 SW 10th Ave, Topeka, KS 66604](#)

May 9th, 2:00 – 4:00: KS OL Board & Committee Meeting
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, Menninger Room 206
[1515 SW 10th Ave, Topeka, KS 66604](#)

August 8th, 1:00 – 3:00: KS OL Board & Committee Meeting
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, Hughes Room 205
[1515 SW 10th Ave, Topeka, KS 66604](#)

November 14th, KS OL Board & Committee Meeting: TBD

Save the Date: Rail Safety Week: September 23-29, 2024



OLI releases new [kid materials](#)

KS OL Year in Review

Targeted Campaigns

Kansas Incidents

2023

Total Incidents*

42

Fatalities: 19

Injuries: 22

Trespassing Incidents

14

2 Injuries

12 Fatalities

Crossings Incidents

27

20 Injuries

7 Fatalities

*Current through ?

2022

Total Incidents

34

Fatalities: 4

Injuries: 12

Trespassing Incidents

5 injuries

Crossings Incidents

29

Injuries: 7

Fatality: 4



KS OL blasted the airwaves of Eastern KS in July & August with 300 radio ads, 128 announcements, & a live remote.



With the Summer Concert Series KS OL gives away 2 pairs of concert tickets. This year we scored Taylor Swift tickets to her KC show. We did a 2 hour live give away in Topeka (pictured above) with free mini-train rides generously paid for by SNCO Parks & Rec, and Alpha Media. In two hours, we saw more than 800 people and crowds continued till the end of the day.

With the second pair of tickets, we wanted to get the rest of Kansas involved we raffled the them on Facebook. We raised enough to pay for the media campaign, gained over 250



'22-'23 Radio ads played during all WSU sports. Safety messaging will be on scoreboards & on campus entry sign.



Geofencing: Digital ads run at crossings in Topeka, Johnson & Wyandotte Counties, Wichita, Hutchinson, Coffeyville, and all of Emporia.

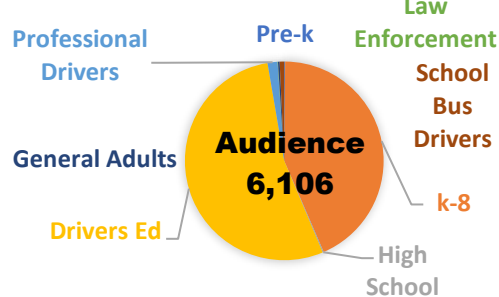


KS OL distributed 2,040 gloves, 600 hats, 1,000 socks, 200 backpacks, & 2,100 safety brochures to homeless across Kansas.

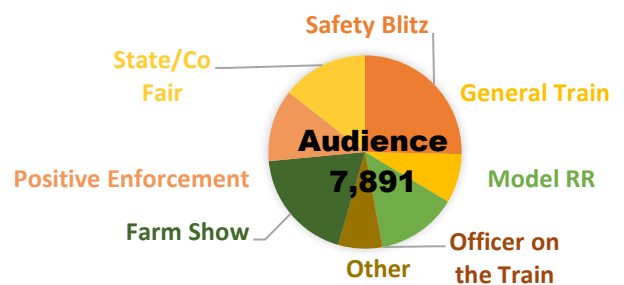


Again, KS OL ran ads in the Fishing and Hunting & Fur Harvesting Regulations. Over 500,000 copies distributed Statewide for free.

PRESENTATIONS



SPECIAL EVENTS



70+ Law Enforcement Officers Trained in the RISC Program

FRA Kansas Statistics

Last 5 years:

2017:

Incidents: 52
Crossings: 34
 Fatalities: 5
Trespass: 18
 Fatalities: 10

2018:

Incidents: 46
Crossings: 35
 Fatalities: 5
Trespass: 11
 Fatalities: 9

2019:

Incidents: 44
Crossings: 32
 Fatalities: 5
Trespass: 12
 Fatalities: 3

2020:

Incidents: 49
Crossings: 36
 Fatalities: 9
Trespass: 13
 Fatalities: 6

2021:

Incidents: 49
Crossings: 35
 Fatalities: 5
Trespass: 14
 Fatalities: 11

For anyone out there who is having a bad day

988

is here for you.

ASLRRA Partners with OLI to Train OLAVs

The [American Short Line and Regional Association \(ASLRRA\)](#) has asked Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) to again partner with them at their [annual conference](#) in Kansas City, March 24-26. This is an exciting opportunity to train interested and registered applicants already connected to the rail industry to become Operation Lifesaver Authorized volunteers!

At last year's conference, OLI trained twelve new volunteers from across the United States! This year, OLI has improved the process for OLAV applicants to indicate they are conference attendees and will be able to jump from application approval to the face-to-face training.

If you or someone you know will be attending the conference and are interested in becoming an OLAV the process begins at conference [registration](#).

Millions Reached During RSW: (cont from p1)

shared our Rail Safety Week campaigns and messaging, generating 8.8 million social media impressions and over 4,100 news stories. OLI's Rail Safety Week digital national and state campaigns on social media channels and via streaming devices, made possible through grant funding from the

Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, resulted in 15.1 million impressions throughout the U.S.

"Our combined efforts are making a difference. Keep sharing the rail safety message – and save the date for next year, September 23-29, 2024. Together, we can #STOPTrackTragedies," Maleh stated.

The Rail Safety Week 2023 Results Report may be viewed or downloaded [here](#) and on the OLI Rail Safety Week [landing page](#).

KS OL OUT & ABOUT:



Emporia PD, Lyon County Sheriff's Office, BNSF railway, and KS OL partnered in an officer on the train event.



KS OL handed out hundreds of copies of Clifford's rail safety book to schools and libraries across Kansas.



Vally Center PD handed out STTT pencils to kids at local crossings



KS OL welcomes Genevieve of White Line CDL as our first stationary OLAV! She will train new professional drivers about rail safety as part of her regular CDL curriculum.