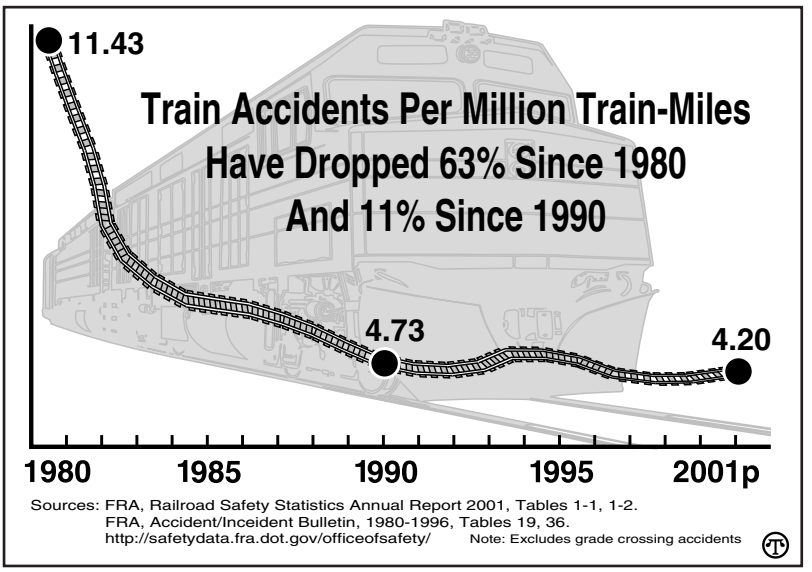
SAFETY SENSE

Railroad Industry Makes Safety Gains



Sources: FRA, Railroad Safety Statistics Annual Report 2001, Tables 1-1, 1-2.
FRA, Accident/Inceident Bulletin, 1980-1996, Tables 19, 36.
http://safetydata.fra.dot.gov/officeofsafety/ Note: Excludes grade crossing accidents

(NAPSA)—Through a concentrated effort between rail management and labor, the railroad industry has been able to engineer a 63 percent decline in train accident and employee injury rates.

A key factor behind this statistic is the railroad industry's ongoing commitment to self-improvement—be it the trains themselves, the tracks, even the customer service. In fact, since 1980, the railroad industry has invested billions of dollars on technologies that improve both safety and efficiency. Examples include:

• Two-way end-of-train (EOT) braking devices permit the simultaneous application of air brakes from both the front and rear of a train. By July 1997, railroads had EOT devices installed on all trains that routinely travel at speeds greater than 30 miles per hour or operate on steep grades.

• Heat-treated curved plate wheels, which are more durable than the straight plate wheels they replaced, have led to a substantial reduction in wheel-related derailments.

• Improved metallurgy and premium fastening systems have improved the stability of track geometry, reducing the risk of track failure leading to derailments.

• Additional wayside detectors have been installed to warn about defective equipment, so defective cars can be pulled out of use before wheels, axles or other components fail.

• Electronic braking systems—now in limited use—that not only reduce braking distances by as much as 40 percent but also increase track capacity.

• Computer-aided dispatching systems are now being used to give dispatchers a superior overview of track segments.

Through comprehensive employee training; massive investments in infrastructure, equipment and technology; cooperative efforts involving rail management, rail suppliers, rail labor and the Federal Railroad Administration; collaboration with customers and communities; cutting-edge research and development; and steadfast commitment to applicable laws and regulations, railroads are consistently at the forefront of advancing safety.