

Safety CHALLENGE

Patience and Planning From Motorists Help Students Arrive Safely *Rail Crossing Rules For School Buses*

(NAPSA)—With a record number of students off to school this year there are ever more buses carrying students on our roads. Operation Lifesaver, a national safety organization, reminds drivers to be careful along school routes, and especially at railroad crossings.

“Many times we get into a routine, forgetting to leave home just a little earlier to allow for additional traffic,” Operation Lifesaver’s President Gerri Hall explained. “Enough time for driver patience is important, particularly at railroad crossings because school buses are required to stop, open their doors and look down the tracks in both directions before proceeding across.”

Started in 1972, Operation Lifesaver works with community, government and school groups in cities, towns and counties across North America to bring more safety awareness and cooperation between communities and the rail industry. Its mission has been to reduce collisions and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and along railway rights-of-way. The number of vehicle-train collisions at highway-rail intersections has been declining in those succeeding 30 years. In 2001, the Federal Highway Administration noted a 73 percent reduction since OLI’s rail/highway education programs



SAFETY WHISTLES—School bus drivers in a number of states use yellow safety whistles to alert riders to be quiet until the bus safely crosses the track.

began.

In North and South Carolina, Operation Lifesaver joins school districts to encourage students on buses to give their drivers quiet time as they approach and cross the tracks, especially near the beginning of the school year when bus drivers may be unfamiliar with new routes. School bus drivers use yellow safety whistles to alert their riders to an upcoming rail crossing.

This national rail safety organization has more than 2,500 certified presenters throughout the U.S. and Canada who are trained to speak to community and school groups to raise awareness of the need for caution around railroad tracks and trains. For more information or to request a visit by an OLI presenter, visit the Operation Lifesaver Web