

May 16, 2022

To: Railroad companies operating in Iowa

Subject: Traffic Control on Highway Right of Way (ROW) and Notification to Roadway Authorities

Iowa Department of Transportation field staff and local roadway authorities have contacted us concerning instances of railroad companies and/or their contractors closing at-grade crossings to perform work and not notifying the roadway authority in advance of the closure; thus, causing disruption and safety issues for the traveling public due to failure to implement proper protocols. Due to the lack of notification, proper detours and appropriate traffic control measures were not undertaken. In most instances, a railroad company does not have the authority to utilize non-railroad right-of-way without the express permission of the roadway authority.

Iowa Code section 327G.21 provides as follows:

When a railroad company changes, alters, or repairs a highway crossing, it shall upon completion of the work leave it free from obstructions to travel and in good condition. If travel will be obstructed while any alterations or repairs are being made, the railroad company shall provide safe and convenient temporary ways for the public to avoid or pass such obstructions.

In order to comply with Iowa Code 327G.21, railroads and/or their contractors are required to coordinate with the appropriate roadway authority in advance of obstructing any at-grade crossings or roadway ROW for railroad crossing construction or maintenance purposes. Notification is requested at least 30 days in advance of the approximate starting date of non-emergency work to allow the roadway authority and railroad/contractor to determine the detour and appropriate signage. For emergency work, notification to the local roadway authority should be done as soon as practical.

For State highway crossings, contact the District Traffic Technician listed at <https://iowadot.gov/districts/District-contacts>

For local city and county roadway crossings, contact the city engineer or county engineer, respectively. https://iowadot.gov/local_systems/County-Reports-Funding-Resources/local_jurisdictions/local_jurisdictions_information

Please contact the Iowa DOT Rail Section at 515-239-1140 if there are any questions.

Sincerely,



Amanda Martin
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