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You have to stop. It could save your life.

The Burleson Police Department's traffic unit, Union Pacific Railroad Police Department, and City marshals coordinated a railroad crossing enforcement detail in Burleson on Wednesday, Aug. 26. Why? To remind drivers that flashing red lights at railroad crossings are the same as a stop sign, and may save lives.

The detail was just two hours, 2 p.m.-4 p.m., at four railroad crossings - Renfro Street, Ellison Street and Eldred Street (all in Old Town) and Alsbury Boulevard on the north side of Burleson. One of the marshals rode the train for a bird's-eye view of the tracks and to communicate with the officers on the ground. The officers stopped eight vehicles and issued six citations and two warnings. Three of the citations were handed out, along with education about Operation Lifesaver, at the Renfro crossing and three were issued at the Alsbury crossing.

This is the first railroad crossing enforcement in 2015 in Burleson. In September 2014, the police department's traffic unit issued 12 citations at three crossings - Ellison, Renfro and Alsbury - between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Burleson Police and Union Pacific have been conducting crossing enforcement details since 2008. Since May 2009, three lives have been lost in crashes involving trains at railroad crossings in Burleson. Prior to 2009, the most current train-related fatalities included two teenagers lost in separate railroad crossing accidents in the late 1980s. The Alsbury crossing was the site of a fatal crash involving a 23-year-old Burleson man in May 2009.

If the railroad crossing arms are down or the warning lights are flashing, drivers must stop before reaching the white stop bar painted on the pavement. Flashing lights must be treated like a stop sign. Be sure you can clear the tracks by at least three feet on both sides. Never stop on the tracks. Drivers must stop and wait for the gates to go up and the warning lights to stop flashing before they can safely proceed over the tracks. It usually takes a train a mile or more to come to a full stop.

According to railroad crossing safety information, it is nearly impossible to accurately judge the distance and speed of an oncoming train. At crossings that have adjacent tracks (Renfro Street), a train may be approaching from the other direction, so don't cross unless both tracks are clear. For more information, go to [www.burlesontx.com/operationlifesaver](http://www.burlesontx.com/operationlifesaver).