Maintenance Advisory

From Jon W. Reincke, Engineer of Operations

MDOT
Division of Operations
6333 Lansing Road
Lansing, MI 48917

Questions regarding this Maintenance Advisory should be directed to:

Carl Fedders, Engineer
Roadway Operations Unit
Phone; 517-335-6776 or
FedderC@michigan.gov

Kristian Foondle, Rail Safety Manager
Office of Rail
Phone: 517-648-7588
FoondleK@michigan.gov

Snow Plowing Near Railroad Crossings

Please refer to the Michigan Department of Transportation's Rail Safety bulletin located in the link below for tips regarding snow removal and de-icing at and around railroad crossings:

Rail Safety Bulletin: Tips when Plowing at Railroad Crossings

RAIL SAFETY BULLETIN TIPS WHEN PLOWING AT RAILROAD CROSSINGS

Plowing
Plowing too close to railroad crossing surfaces can dislodge ties and damage rails, which can lead to derailments and costly repair and replacement expenses.

Raise Blades
Reduce snowplow pressure and raise blades slightly over tracks to avoid catching rails or gouging surface materials with snowplow blades.

Salt and Gravel
Applying salt and gravel on roadway approaches to railroad crossings will assist motorists in maintaining adequate stopping distances. Also be sure to clear off railroad pavement markings on roadway approaches.

Salt and Chemicals
When salt and chemicals are applied on or near railroad crossings, railroad ballast can become contaminated, resulting in false activations of the automatic warning devices. Restrict application when possible.

Avoid Piling
Snow should not be piled in front of railroad crossing warning devices. This can block the view of approaching trains and interfere with proper operation of gate mechanisms.

Reduce Speeds
Reduce speed when plowing through railroad crossings. The force and impact of plowed snow can damage or misalign automatic warning devices and signs.

Bungalows/Houses
Snow should not be piled in front of railroad bungalows/houses or into access roads parallel and adjacent to tracks (these are used to access property and equipment).

Snow Piles
Finally, do not leave piled snow on tracks! This can cause derailments and damage to train equipment.

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