

Data Summary: Rail-Related Injuries for the Greater Houston Area

This data summary details rail-related injuries occurring between 2011 and 2020 in the Greater Houston area consisting of Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Brazoria, Liberty, Galveston, Austin, Chambers, and Waller counties. The full profile, including data figures and county-level incident maps, can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/SKWHoustonRailProfile>.

Overview

- 337 rail-related injuries occurred in the Chicago Metro area between 2011 and 2020, for an average of 34 injuries per year. The number of injuries in 2020 was slightly lower than in 2011 (22 and 25).
- Harris County had the most injuries (57%), followed by Fort Bend (16%), Montgomery (9%), Brazoria (6%), Liberty (5%), Galveston (4%), Austin (2%), Chambers (1%), Waller (1%).
- Children ages 0 to 19 years accounted for 13% of injuries.
- Most injuries (96%) involved trains or other on-track equipment while 4% did not involve on-track equipment.
- More than half (57%) of injuries were due to trespassing¹ incidents and 43% were due to railroad crossing² incidents. Moreover, trespassing injuries were more often fatal (43%) compared to railroad crossing injuries (14%).
- Railroad crossing injuries were most frequent between 3:00 PM and 5:59 PM, while trespassing injuries were most frequent between 12:00 AM and 2:59 AM.

Railroad Crossing Circumstances¹

- Those injured in railroad crossing incidents were most often motor vehicle occupants (92%).
- Going through or around the gates was the reported activity most often associated with injury at railroad crossings among highway users (41%).
- Most (61%) railroad crossing injuries occurred when the weather was clear, 29% during cloudy weather, and 10% during sleet, rain, and fog.
- 50% of railroad crossing injuries occurred during dark or low-light hours. Of those, 39% occurred at crossings that were not illuminated by streetlights or special lights.

Trespassing Circumstances²

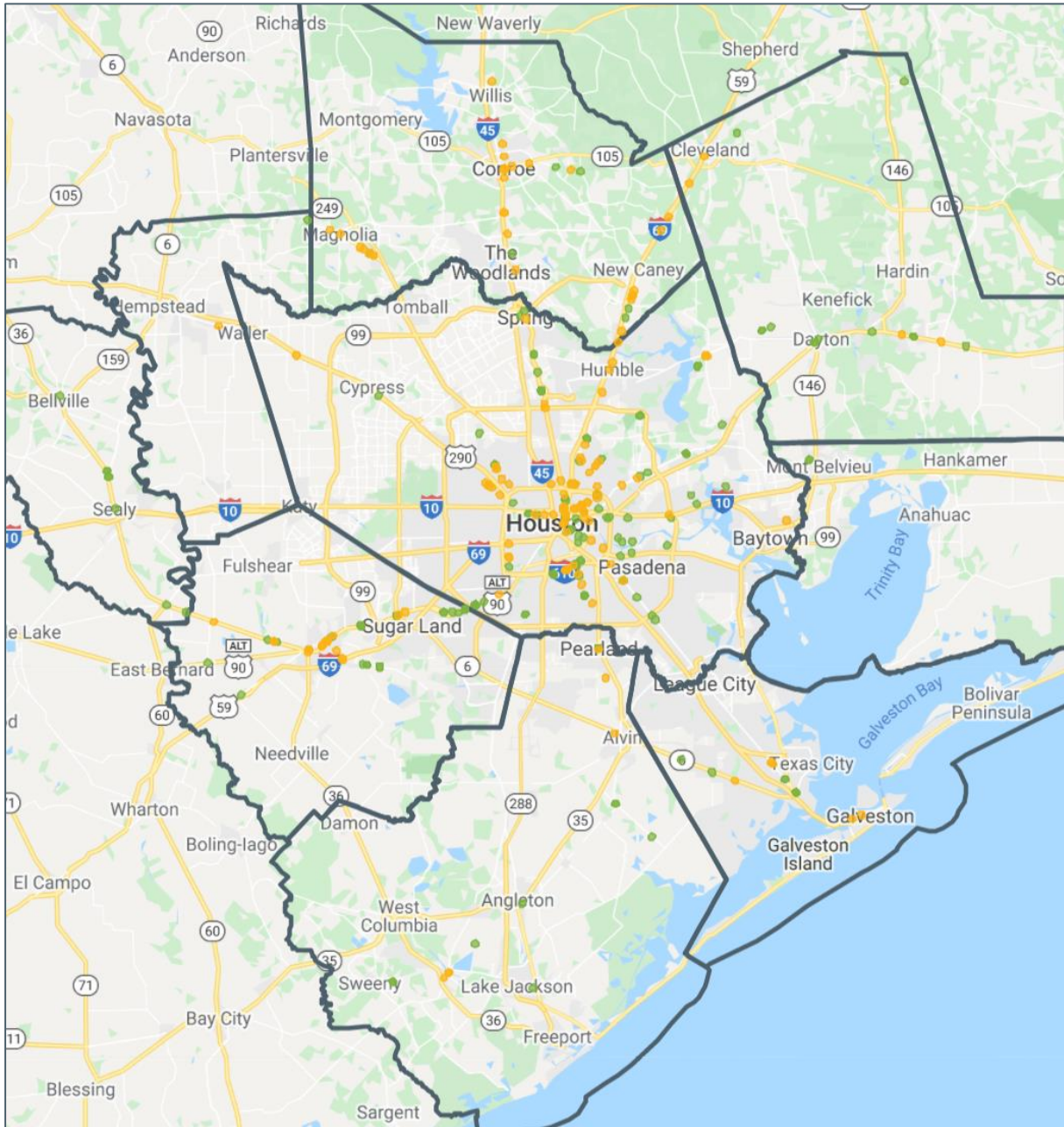
- 77% of trespassers who were injured were struck by on-track equipment. Of those, 67% were reported as on the tracks at the time of impact, 16% were between the tracks, and 12% were beside the tracks. Of those struck on, between, or beside the tracks, 37% were walking, 36% were lying down, and 9% were sitting at the time of impact.

¹ Trespassing injuries occur when a person is injured while on private railroad property without permission. They are most often pedestrians taking a shortcut across or along tracks, but also include loiterers and those engaging in recreational activities such as hunting or jogging.

² Railroad crossing injuries are when a person or highway user is struck by a train while attempting to cross at a designated crossing where tracks intersect a roadway or walkway at the same level.



Rail-Related Injuries by Incident Type; Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Brazoria, Liberty, Galveston, Austin, Chambers and Waller Counties, TX



● Railroad crossing injury ● Trespassing injury

The full report and other rail safety resources for families, educators and community partners can be downloaded from the Safe Kids Rail Safety Station online hub at safekids.org/RailSafetyStation.

