

Murfreesboro Police Department

Media Release



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First responders remind residents it's against the law and dangerous to walk on railroad tracks after two people hit

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – (October 14, 2022) First responders are urging residents to avoid walking on train tracks after two people were hit and injured within two days in Murfreesboro.

The latest incident happened on the CSX railroad bridge next to the Searcy Street Greenway on Thursday, Oct. 13 at 4:34 p.m.

The initial investigation shows as the train approached two 18-year-old women and a dog attempted to run to get off the tracks. One was able to make off in time. The passing train struck the woman with the dog. She fell roughly 35-feet to the ground below. The dog wasn't located.

Personnel with Murfreesboro Fire Rescue Department and Rutherford County Emergency Medical Services treated the woman on scene. She was awake and alert but sustained multiple severe injuries. The woman was taken to Ascension St. Thomas Rutherford Hospital and then flown by a LifeFlight helicopter to Vanderbilt Medical Center to be evaluated and treated for her injuries.

“From a distance it's hard to hear a train coming,” said MFRD Rescue 4 Captain Chief Matt Young. “Train tracks are dangerous, and no one should ever walk on them.”

On Tuesday, Oct. 11, a 24-year-old man was hit by a double locomotive behind Beamon Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram on S. Church St. as he walked alongside the tracks with his head down. The locomotives were not pulling any railcars. The locomotive struck the man's left shoulder, knocking him over. He was taken to the hospital for evaluation and further treatment.

“Walking on train tracks is dangerous and illegal,” said Murfreesboro Police Department Lieutenant Greg Walker. “Most don't realize how quickly a train can approach you and it takes quite a bit of time for it to stop.”

Railroad tracks are considered private property, and violators could face federal and/or local charges for trespassing or aggravated trespassing.

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“More than often, it doesn’t end well when a person encounters a train,” Walker said. “Simply avoiding walking on a train track can potentially save a life.”

Each year, more than 400 people trespassing on railroad tracks are hit and killed by trains in the U.S., according to the Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration. Nearly as many are injured, and most are preventable.

You should only cross a railroad track at a designated pedestrian or roadway crossing.

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Attachment: Scene Photo