

Issued: June 15, 2022

Preliminary Report HWY22MH009

This is preliminary information, subject to change, and may contain errors. Any errors in this report will be corrected when the final report has been completed.

Grade Crossing Crash

Clarendon Hills, IL
May 11, 2022

About 8:16 a.m. central daylight time, on May 11, 2022, an eastbound Metra commuter train struck a northbound 2004 International commercial box truck at a grade crossing in Clarendon Hills, DuPage County, Illinois. The Metra train was operating on BNSF Railway tracks in a push-pull configuration with the cab car in the lead. The highway portion of the grade crossing consisted of two northbound lanes and one southbound lane of Prospect Avenue. (See figure 1.)

The highway-rail grade crossing was equipped with an active grade crossing warning system with flashing LED light units, an overhead signal cantilever over the northbound lanes, two fiberglass gate arms mounted on two signal masts, four warning bells, and four pedestrian gate arms; the system was designed to warn all directions of highway and pedestrian traffic. The roadway gate arms extended across the incoming lanes of S. Prospect Avenue to the centerline for each direction of traffic. The truck was stopped on the tracks (facing north) at the southern portion of the Prospect Avenue intersection. The grade crossing warning lights and gates activated and, as the gates lowered, the northbound gate struck the truck. The three truck occupants exited the truck cab before the train arrived at the grade crossing and struck the left front of the truck.

When the Metra train hit it, the truck rotated clockwise and struck the right side of the train's lead cab car, below the windows. The train did not derail. The collision resulted in exterior gouging of the cab car, with intrusion damage to the lower-level seating compartment, as well as train window damage. (See figure 2.) The truck sustained damage from the impact and a postcrash fire. As a result of the crash, one train passenger was ejected and fatally injured, two other train passengers were injured, and two train crewmembers were injured. The truck's driver and two passengers were not injured.

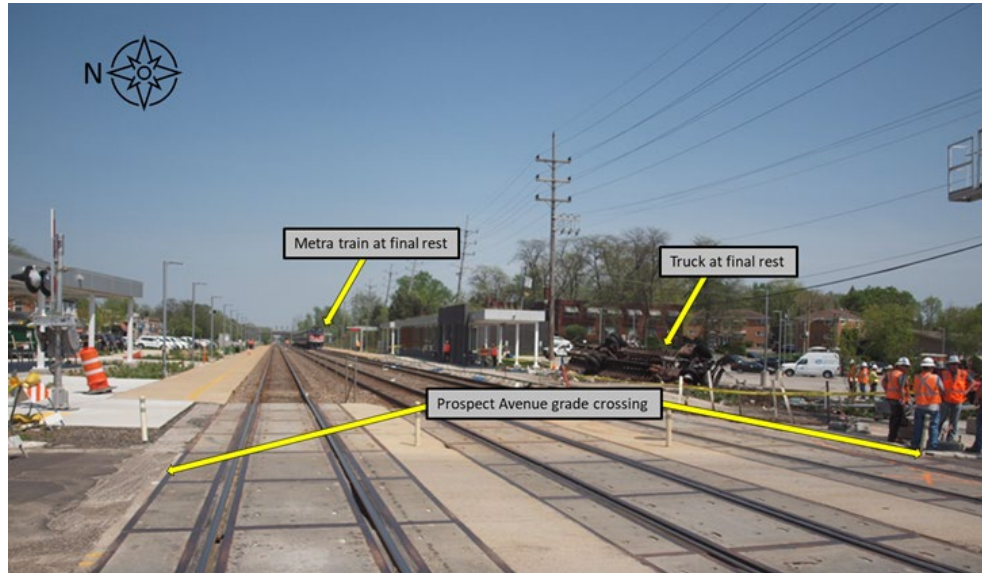


Figure 1. View of grade crossing looking east, showing train and truck at final rest.



Figure 2. Truck impact damage to side of train cab car.

The following parties are working with the NTSB investigation:

- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
- Metra Police Department
- Village of Clarendon Hills
- Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC)
- Metra
- BNSF Railway

- Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS)
- Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation (SMART) Workers
- Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET)

All aspects of the crash remain under investigation while the NTSB determines the probable cause, with the intent of issuing safety recommendations to prevent similar events.