Mason County Sheriff's Traffic Team to Increase Crossing Grade Enforcement

Local News

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Shelton, WA - The Mason County Sheriff’s Office Traffic Team will be stepping up enforcement at railroad crossing grades in the County. This announcement is in conjunction with Simpson Lumber’s announcement that railroad operations will resume in mid February after a year long hiatus.

Simpson Lumber suspended railroad operations west of the Park Street Interchange because of a bridge wash out over Goldsbourgh Creek near South 8th Street in December of 2007. Since that time efforts by Simpson Lumber Company to reopen the rail line have been ongoing. The railroad will reopen after the new bridge is set into place on the newly installed abutments. Railroad Superintendent, Jerry Gregerson says “the bridge is scheduled to be set in place on February 2.”

Simpson officials and Sheriff’s Office traffic team members along Shelton Police and Washington State Patrol are going to be paying particular attention to grade crossing safety. Participating law enforcement agencies will be citing motorists for violations during the next few weeks.

We are all concerned about grade crossing safety because motorists are no longer use to dealing with Simpson trains utilizing the crossing grades. In 2008 our nation experienced 2391 grade crossing collisions with 286 of those collisions being fatalities. Sheriff Casey Salisbury commented “I have never seen a train collision where the train lost.”

Law Enforcement Officers will be watching for drivers who fail to yield to approaching trains, drivers who drive past activated crossing signals, and trespassers on railroad right of way. Children on their way to school are reminded that the new bridge is a railroad bridge and not a pathway to and from school. The speed of trains approaching grade crossings can be difficult to judge. Drivers are warned not to try to race the train to the crossing.

Finally, motorists and pedestrians are reminded when approaching a railroad grade crossing to “Look, Listen and Live.”