

Quiet Zone Fact Sheet – University of Colorado A Line

Feb. 28, 2019

What is a quiet zone?

- Quiet zones are areas along a railroad segment where train operators don't have to sound their train horns at crossings on a routine basis.
- Quiet zones are usually requested by local communities to lessen the impact of repeated train horn noise in neighborhoods.
- Train operators maintain discretion to use train horns under circumstances that require additional safety precautions.

When will quiet zones go into effect?

- Starting on March 1, 2019, commuter rail and freight trains traveling within the established quiet zone area are not required to sound horns at each at-grade crossing, with some exceptions.
- Quiet zones are expected to take effect with the first scheduled commuter rail train service of the day on Friday, March 1, which departs from Denver Union Station at 3:15 a.m.

Where are quiet zones located?

- This implementation of quiet zones is for the rail alignment along the University of Colorado A Line and Union Pacific Railroad within the City and County of Denver.
- The nine crossings where quiet zones are in effect are York/Josephine streets, Clayton Street, Steele Street, Dahlia Street, Holly Street, Monaco Parkway, Quebec Street, Ulster Street and Havana Street.
- Denver quiet zones have been made possible through close coordination and partnership among RTD, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), City and County of Denver, Union Pacific Railroad and commuter rail concessionaire Denver Transit Partners (DTP).

Do quiet zones apply to freight railroads?

- Yes, starting on March 1, 2019, commuter rail and freight trains traveling within established quiet zones are not required to sound horns at each at-grade crossing, with some exceptions (see below).

What can be expected upon implementation of a quiet zone?

- Train operators maintain the discretion to use train horns under circumstances requiring additional safety precautions.
- Gates, lights and bells will continue to activate and sound at crossings as a warning to car and pedestrian traffic at the crossings.
- Gate attendants may be present at crossings at any time as a safety precaution, such as when routine maintenance or repairs occur, as required by federal regulations.

- Although train horns largely will cease when quiet zones go into effect, RTD reminds the public to always follow safety signage, obey warning devices such as flashing red lights and gate arms, and stay alert and look both ways for trains.
- When train horns do sound, they are required to do so within a range of 96 decibels to 110 decibels.
- If at any time the FRA deems it necessary, quiet zones can be eliminated and horn use resumed.

What safety measures have been put into place along the University of Colorado A Line in preparation for quiet zones?

- **Audible and visual alerts** – Bells at gate location and flashing red lights to alert all traffic and pedestrians that a train is coming.
- **Safety signage** – Ample safety signage installed to alert pedestrians and vehicles of where to safely stop for the trains.
- **Quadrant gate arms** – Four gate arms in place to block lanes in both directions, to stop vehicles from going around the gates when they are descended.
- **Pedestrian gates** – A gate arm or pull swing gate at each intersection to alert them of a train coming.
- **Channelizing** – Chain link fencing along the sidewalk approaching the intersection to channel pedestrians to the correct area. All crossings are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- **Education** – RTD has conducted an extensive safety outreach and education program since before the commuter rail lines became operational, underway for years as the Partners in Safety Program. To request a safety education presentation or materials, [fill out the form here](#) or contact communityengagement@rtd-denver.com.

Now that trains will silence their horns, how can the public stay safe near a train line?

- Don't be distracted – Avoid listening to music or using your phone while around trains and tracks.
- Always follow safety signage and obey warning devices such as flashing red lights and gate arms.
- Stop and wait for crossing gates to fully rise before crossing the tracks.
- Always look both ways before crossing the track, as trains can travel from either direction at any time.
- Never trespass on any train track – it's illegal and dangerous.
- Gate attendants may be present at crossings at any time as a safety precaution, such as when routine maintenance or repairs occur. Be prepared to follow their instructions.

When will other areas receive quiet zones?

- RTD, FRA and the City of Aurora continue to work through the process for establishing quiet zones on the University of Colorado A Line's two remaining crossings, both located in Aurora.

- Communities along the G Line – Adams County, Arvada and Wheat Ridge – continue to make progress toward establishing quiet zones, a key step before RTD can open the G Line for passenger service.