

# RAILROAD FACTS & FIGURES

## North America's Freight Railroads: On Board With Moving Our Goods

(NAPSA)—The next time you turn on the lights, eat a slice of bread, ride in a car or read this paper, you may care to turn your thoughts to trains.

That's because America's freight trains deliver the wood used to make the paper, 70 percent of the automobiles produced in the U.S., 40 percent of the nation's grain, and 65 percent of the nation's coal—which provides more than half the nation's electricity. Many other products we use every day, from corn to copper to computers, take a train ride to get to consumers. In fact, in the U.S., railroads account for more than 40 percent of all freight transportation—and that's more than trucks, boats, barges or planes.

Forming a seamless system of more than 170 thousand miles of track—enough to circle the globe more than half a dozen times—freight railroads are the backbone of North America's freight transportation network.

One reason is because freight trains are so efficient. A single freight train can carry the load of up to 500 trucks. With America's roads more congested than ever, shipping goods by train can significantly reduce highway congestion.

Almost two billion tons of



**Since the first railroad was chartered in North America in 1827, the rail industry has been a vital player in our economy. With 173,000 miles of track stretching coast to coast and North to South, railroads are the primary transporters of the goods that are important to our daily lives, like petroleum, coal, fruit and vegetables.**

freight move across America's rail lines each year—that's 7 tons for every person living in the U.S. Our freight railroads are the world's busiest, moving more than four times as much freight as do

all of Western Europe's freight railroads combined.

In addition, U.S. freight railroads contribute billions of dollars each year to the economy through investments, wages, purchases and taxes.

- Total employment: 246,000
- Retirees and family members supported: 700,000
- Annual capital investment: \$6 billion
- Annual taxes paid: \$3.5 billion

Freight rail also provides U.S. businesses with safe, effective and environmentally friendly shipping solutions. Since 1980, railroads have improved their services and rates. Railroads are one of the safest modes of transportation around—rail accidents have declined by 64 percent over the past two decades. The Department of Labor says U.S. railroads have been one of the most productive industries in the country. The vast majority of the massive railroad productivity has been passed on to rail customers in the form of lower rates. On average it costs 29 percent less to move freight by rail now than it did in 1981, and 59 percent less in inflation-adjusted dollars.

You can learn more about North American freight trains at [www.tomorrowrailroads.org](http://www.tomorrowrailroads.org).