

Concerns Voiced About Trains Blocking Jackson Co. Road

Concern is voiced about trains blocking a Jackson County road in the Delia area for an extended period of time.

County Clerk Kathy Mick told county commissioners this week she had received a complaint from a Delia resident concerning trains parked on a crossing west of Delia, blocking traffic for up to an hour.

Recently, the resident said an ambulance was stuck at the location for an extended period of time.

The resident also expressed concern because kids going to and from school in Emmett are speeding in order to beat the trains.

The resident said that in the past, if a train was going to be stopped for a long period of time, the rail cars would be uncoupled to provide an opening to cross the road.

District Judge Mike Ireland told commissioners he asked for an Attorney General's opinion on the issue back in 1994 when he was county attorney. Ireland said he was told there's a law that says a train can only block an intersection for no longer than 10 minutes if it's within a half mile of a city's limits. Otherwise, there are no restrictions.

Judge Ireland said he thought the only recourse for commissioners would be to contact the Kansas Legislature about changing the law. He said another option would be to approach the railroad directly and ask them about the possibility of uncoupling the cars to provide access.

County Road and Bridge Administrator Randy Pool said he had contacted the railroad in the past and was told if a train was stopped longer than 15 minutes the cars would be uncoupled.