

Opinion: Nevada needs to do something about rail, road safety

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As each day passes more revelations come to light about the deadly Amtrak train crash June 24 and alarming safety issues on Nevada's rails and roadways when it comes to trains and trucks.

These are issues that need immediate action and have implications for everyone counting on safety along Nevada's roads and tracks from train passengers and crews members to truck drivers.

As investigators continue their work on the truck-train crash that left six dead and dozens injured, information brought to light by the *Reno Gazette-Journal* reveals first-hand reports of trouble earlier at the same site. Nine months ago, a different truck almost crashed into another Amtrak passenger train at the U.S. 95 site 70 miles east of Reno.

Now, stereotypical of government reacting after the fact, a Nevada agency is launching a statewide investigation into all Nevada roads with high speed limits and railroad crossings.

Also unacceptable for Nevada, is that trucker Lawrence Valli, who plowed into an Amtrak train, had two additional speeding violations besides the four reported by the state Department of Motor Vehicles. But the speeding citations – and Valli's other tickets for driving without insurance, without a seatbelt and talking on a cellphone – did not reach a level under Nevada law that would have allowed officials to suspend or revoke Valli's license.

Safely off the rails now, Ron Kaminkow, engineer on the Amtrak train that was hit by the truck late last month, told *Gazette-Journal* reporter Martha Bellisle that the U.S. 95 crash site is dangerous. He hopes changes are made so that crashes like the one he was in never occur again.

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