

Quiet Zone Information

Locomotive horns enhance safety at highway-rail crossings by warning of approaching trains. The Federal Railroad Administration requires horns be sounded where trains approach public grade crossings. An exception is where a public authority (municipality) has created a valid “quiet zone.”

The rule was published in the Federal Register April 27, 2005, Volume 70, No. 80, beginning on page 21,888.

Learn more about the locomotive horn rule. <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0889>

Community request to establish a new quiet zone

All requirements of the FRA rule must be met to establish a new quiet zone, including submitting a written notification to initiate the process. Proposed quiet zones involving Grafton and Upton’s (G&U) public grade crossings should be submitted to:

John DeWaele, General Manager
Grafton and Upton Railroad Company
42 Westboro Road
North Grafton, MA 01536

To implement safety enhancements in compliance with Part 222 involving active warning devices at crossings, contact the G&U General Manager. Upgrades will be performed under G&U’ direction. The municipality (or other grants) will cover costs to the railroad as well as design, installation, and maintenance.

Costs of quiet zone safety measures

G&U’s primary concern at rail-highway grade crossings is safety. The company will assist communities as necessary, but the responsible public authority must fully comply with federal rules. Public authorities pay for preliminary engineering, construction, continuous maintenance, and replacement of active warning devices or their components installed at crossings to meet quiet zone standards. Costs to install safety measures vary. Examples include (not including highway improvements which may come at an additional cost to the public authority):

- Constant Warning Time Two-Quadrant Gate System - \$300,000 to \$400,000
- Four-Quadrant Gate Systems - \$300,000 to \$500,000+
- Basic Active Warning System including flashing lights and gates, constant warning time, power out indicator, and cabin - \$185,000 to \$400,000
- Basic Interconnect - \$5,000 to \$15,000+

- Annual Maintenance - \$4,000 to \$10,000