

List of rail accidents in Canada

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First table: 10 or more deaths

Second table: other notable events

Worst railway accidents

Accident	Date	Location	Killed	Injured	Description	Ref.
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Jeannette's Creek train wreck	27 October 1854				Chatham-Kent, Ontario	52+ 48
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Believing a westbound Great Western Railway (GW) express had already passed, a locomotive engineer backed his 15-car gravel train from a siding onto the main line, where it collided with the oncoming express. The freight engineer and conductor were charged with manslaughter, but the outcome is unknown. [1][2]

Desjardins Canal disaster	12 March 1857	Hamilton, Ontario	59	18	A wheel fracture caused the leading wheels of a locomotive to derail. By this time, the westbound GW passenger train was on the Desjardins Canal bridge. Tearing the timber, the locomotive crashed through the bridge deck, dragging the passenger cars into the icy water.	[3][4]
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St-Hilaire train disaster	29 June 1864	Otterburn Park, near Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Quebec				99
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100 At the controls of a westbound Grand Trunk (GT) passenger train (partly using repurposed grain cars), the engineer missed a warning light indicating an open swing span for the Beloeil bridge. The locomotive and cars plunged onto a barge passing on the Richelieu River. The engineer's prosecution is unclear. [5]

Shannonville derailment 22 June 1872 east of Shannonville, Ontario 34 31 When a breaking flange caused the leading wheels to derail, an eastbound GT locomotive plunged over an embankment. Two passenger cars telescoped and fell upon the locomotive, scalding the passengers with steam. [6]

Komoka passenger car inferno 28 June 1874 east of Komoka, Ontario 10 ? When an oil lamp fell in a passenger car on a westbound GW mixed train, the fire rapidly spread, because of the delay in alerting the engineer to stop the train. In civil actions, awards to survivors for burn injuries ranged from \$250 to \$1,450. A payment for death was denied. [7]

Yamaska derailment 28 June 1875 west of Yamaska, Quebec 10 25 A westbound construction train of railway contractor Louis-Adélarde Senécal comprised six flatcars loaded with workers pushed by a locomotive. On striking timber laid across the track, the first five flatcars overturned. The identities of the culprits who placed the obstacle were never proven. [8]

Toronto High Park head-on collision 2 January 1884 High Park, Toronto, Ontario 29 ? A light eastbound GT freight and a westbound GT commuter, comprising a locomotive and two wooden passenger cars, struck head on. The pushed furnace set the first passenger car alight. The freight engineer (Richard Jeffry) and conductor (George Barber) were negligent in failing to read the employee timetable carefully but were acquitted of manslaughter. [9]

St. Thomas intersection collision 15 July 1887 St. Thomas, Ontario 17 ? At intersecting tracks in the town centre, a packed northbound GT excursion train rammed a tanker car of crude oil of a westbound Michigan Central Railroad freight. The wreckage fire spread to surrounding buildings, before a second tanker exploded, also injuring spectators. Air brake failure was blamed. [10]

St. George bridge derailment 27 February 1889 east of St. George, Ontario 10 32 While an eastbound GT express was passing the siding, a flange broke on a driving wheel, dislocating the coupling rod. After the derailed express blundered onto the bridge, a dining and a passenger car destroyed a bridge span before plunging to the creek below. Another car was left hanging over the gap. [11]

Hamilton junction derailment 28 Apr 1889 north of Hamilton, Ontario 18 ? At the west/northeast/southeast junction, an eastbound GT express jumped the track on entering a curve. After crossing 59 metres (195 ft) of open ground, the locomotive struck a water tank. A series of cars telescoped and caught fire. A broken flange was blamed, but speed was likely a factor. [12]

Craig Road rear-end collision 9 July 1895 northeast of Saint-Agapit, Quebec 14 38 The first of two northeast-bound GT excursion trains stopped on the main line at Craig Road station, while waiting for an approaching freight train to enter the passing track. Failure to slow before plowing into the rear of the first train indicated negligence by the deceased crew of the following GT locomotive. [13]

Point Ellice Bridge disaster 26 May 1896 Victoria, British Columbia 55 ? The bridge collapsed while a streetcar with about 124 passengers was crossing, causing Car No. 6 and roadway users to plunge into the harbour. Primarily to blame was the Consolidated Electric Railway for the overloaded streetcar. For contributory negligence, the municipality paid victims a total of \$150,000. [14]

Murray Hill head-on collision 15 November 1898 west of Peterborough, Ontario 11 14
Ignoring a red light and unaware the switch was not reset to enter the southern passing track, a GT westbound express collided head on with a slow-moving eastbound freight train on the northern track. The passenger cars telescoped. [15]

Wanstead angled collision 26 December 1902 Wanstead, Ontario 28 32 After waiting for the western switch to be unfrozen, an eastbound GT freight train proceeded to enter the passing track but not before a westbound GT express approached along the main line. The impact overturned both locomotives and telescoped the forward passenger cars. Communications breakdowns between dispatchers were to blame. [16]

Sand Point head-on collision 9 February 1904 west of Sand Point, Ontario 13 23
A westbound Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) express failed to stop for train orders at Sand Point. About 3 kilometres (2 mi) farther west, the locomotive and an eastbound CP express struck head on. Some westbound passenger cars telescoped. This crew was found negligent but faced no charges. [17]

Azilda head-on collision 12 September 1906 Azilda, Ontario 12 ? A westbound CP passenger train was stationary at the eastern switch before entering the passing track. Brake failure on an eastbound CP express led to a head-on crash with the other train. An incorrectly closed valve on the rear of the baggage car caused the loss of air brakes on the following passenger cars. [18]

Lakeview head-on collision 10 November 1909 south of
Trout Lake,
East Vancouver,

British Columbia 15 9 A runaway northwest-bound BCER flatcar loaded with lumber crashed into a southeast-bound BCER streetcar. The brakeman aboard the flatcar had tried to reset the brakes before jumping to safety. The coroner's court was unable to determine whether the flatcar had been properly coupled prior to the incident. [19]

Kilby Creek washout 28 November 1909 south of
Lougheed Mall,
Burnaby,

British Columbia 22 ? Heavy rain had weakened the culvert at Kilby Creek (Lost Creek). When an eastbound Great Northern Railway (GN) work train was crossing the creek, the locomotive had reached the other side prior to the culvert collapsing. A boxcar, carrying a Japanese work gang, and a flatcar, plunged into the ravine. [20]

Spanish River derailment 21 January 1910 west of Webbwood, Ontario 43 38
On the approach, a passenger car midway along a westbound CP express derailed but was safely dragged across the bridge. The next car slammed into the bridge superstructure and split in half. One half burst into flames, the other plunged into the icy river, accompanied by the next two cars. [21][22]

Rogers Pass avalanche 4 March 1910 Rogers Pass, British Columbia 62 0 While clearing an avalanche blocking the track, a CP section gang was buried by a second avalanche. The impact hurled a 91-ton locomotive and plow 15 metres (49 ft) and splintered wooden boxcars. Rescuers found only one survivor, the remainder were frozen corpses.

Queenstown derailment 7 July 1915 south of Niagara Falls, Ontario 15 88 After a descending Niagara Falls and Victoria Park Railway streetcar passed the first curve (only safety switch), motor power was lost when the pole left the overhead wire, the air brakes failed, and only the handbrake was operational. The car negotiated two sharp curves but plunged over an embankment at the third. [23]

Brandon head-on collision 12 January 1916 Brandon, Manitoba 19 ? On the main line (adjacent to the rail yard) an eastbound CP livestock train, and a westbound CP snow-clearing train being pushed, gently collided during poor visibility. The impact rammed the caboose into a buckled flatcar, slicing the former, where about 30 workers were sheltering from the bitter cold. [24]

Drocourt head-on collision 20 March 1929 northwest of Drocourt, Ontario 17 19
Eastbound and westbound Canadian National Railway (CN) transcontinentals crashed head on. The latter had failed to stop for train orders at Drocourt. The westbound conductor was killed, and the negligent engineer was acquitted of manslaughter. [25]

Crerar derailment 27 June 1930 Crerar, Ontario 10 ? During stormy weather, a westbound CN freight train tipped over on encountering a sink hole. Eight of the dead were freighthoppers. The inquest was conducted in conjunction with the Capreol one, 42 km (26 mi) to the west. On the prior day, two passenger cars from an eastbound CN express derailed and plunged into the Vermillion River from the embankment curve, killing five and injuring 36. [26]

Dundas rear-end collision 25 December 1934 west of Dundas, Ontario 15 30+
While his eastbound CN passenger train parked on a siding, a brakeman headed to Dundas to arrange a replacement locomotive. Falsely believing his own train was on the main line, he reset the switch sending an approaching CN express into the siding and the rear of his train but was acquitted of manslaughter. [27]

Downie snow clearing accident 2 March 1936 east of

Albert Canyon,

British Columbia 16 ? When a snowslide engulfed a freight train 6.8 km (4.2 mi) east of Albert Canyon, a work gang began snow removal, but the rescued tender under tow broke loose and ran back down the track. Two occupants jumped safely, but a third jumped to his death. The speeding tender plowed into the work gang causing devastation. [28]

Louiseville truck/train crash 15 August 1936 near Louiseville, Quebec 22 12 A CP freight train sliced a truck attempting to cross the tracks, which was carrying a group returning from a political rally. [29]

Almonte rear-end collision 27 December 1942 Almonte, Ontario 36 155 A southeast-bound CP troop train ran into the rear of a CP local passenger train stopped at the station. The troop train conductor drowned himself before the inquest, which focussed on the absence of adequate warning devices to indicate the presence of the first train. [30]

Aldershot bus/train crash 10 September 1943 Aldershot, Burlington, Ontario 12 2 When a fast eastbound CN passenger train struck a Canada Coach Lines bus stalled on the Waterdown Rd railway crossing, the bus was sliced and dragged several hundred metres. The deceased driver was found negligent. [31]

Dugald rail accident 1 September 1947 Dugald, Manitoba 31 85 A westbound CN excursion train, which failed to stop at the east switch and enter the passing track, collided head on with a stationary eastbound Continental Ltd on the main line. Gas-lit wooden cars burst into flames. Primary blame was on the westbound crew for disobeying train orders and excessive speed. [32]

Canoe River train crash 21 November 1950 north of Valemount, British Columbia 21 58 Faulty train orders provided to a westbound CN troop train led to a head-on collision with an eastbound CN Continental Ltd. Both trains tumbled down an embankment. Most casualties occurred in the wooden cars of the troop train. A telegraph operator was acquitted of manslaughter. [33]

Lamont bus/train crash 29 Nov 1960 Lamont, Alberta 17 25 A westbound CN freight train shattered a school bus negotiating an unguarded railway crossing. The bus driver appeared to have been blinded by the rising sun in that direction. [34][35]

Dorion level crossing accident 7 October 1966 Dorion, Quebec 19 26 An eastbound CN freight train struck a school bus on a railway crossing. The coroner's report concluded that two students on the bus, who were not expecting another train, had raised the crossing barrier after a westbound train had passed.

Hinton train collision 8 February 1986 west of Dalehurst, Alberta 23 71 A westbound CN freight train, which ran a red signal before leaving a portion of double track, collided head on with an eastbound Via Rail Super Continental. The estimated cost of the accident was \$35 million. The three freight crew members may have been asleep or otherwise incapacitated. [36]

Lac-Mégantic rail disaster 6 July 2013 Lac-Mégantic, Quebec 47 ? An unattended 73-car Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway freight train carrying crude oil rolled down the grade. On derailling in the town centre, multiple tank cars burned and exploded, destroying buildings. The locomotive engineer, rail traffic controller, and operations manager were acquitted of criminal negligence.

Other major railway accidents

Accident	Date	Location	Killed	Injured	Description	Ref.
Stittsville head-on collision 1	14 October 1897	east of Stittsville, Ottawa, Ontario		5	A communications breakdown between a dispatcher and the conductor of an eastbound CP express led to a collision with a westbound CP freight train. [37]	
1906 Nairn derailment	1906	near Nairn, Sudbury District, Northern Ontario	1	Multiple	A passenger train derailed to the east of Nairn at a curve which was subsequently gentled. [38]	
Horseshoe Curve derailment	3 September 1907	Caledon, Ontario	7	114	Excessive speed around a sharp curve overturned the locomotive and destroyed four of the seven wooden cars on an eastbound CP excursion train. The conductor and engineer, who were found negligent by the coroner's court, were later acquitted of manslaughter. [39]	
Marathon derailment	10 July 1910	near Marathon, Ontario	3	0	CP 694 derailed and fell into Lake Superior, killing its three crew members. The wreck of the locomotive was discovered by divers in the mid-2010s. [40]	
McKellar derailment	25 June 1913	McKellar, Ottawa, Ontario	8	50	The fourth and fifth cars on a westbound CP passenger train derailed and plunged down an embankment into the river. A loose rail was believed to be the cause. [41]	
Saint-Polycarpe rear-end collision 5	27 December 1916	Saint-Polycarpe, Quebec		6	Believing an eastbound CP express had already passed, an eastbound CP local train entered the main line, where the express rear ended it. [42]	
Deroche automobile/train crash	12 May 1922	Deroche, British Columbia	6	0	At a private railway crossing, a westbound CP passenger train struck an automobile. [43]	
Jessica derailment	5 September 1926	northeast of Hope, British Columbia	4+	0	An air brake failure led to a runaway westbound CP freight train derailling near Jessica station and plunging into the canyon. Only charred bone fragments remained of the four crew and up to seven freighthoppers. [44]	

Cataraqui automobile/train crash	31 December 1928	east of Kingston, Ontario	8	0	
At an unguarded railway crossing, an eastbound CN express struck an automobile. [45]					
Tignish train crash	21 February 1932	near Tignish, Prince Edward Island	4	11	
A snowstorm resulted in a train getting stuck in a snow drift. Another train collided head on with the stuck train. The incident is considered PEI's worst rail accident. [46]					
Cataraqui automobile/train crash	6 October 1945	Chesterville, Ontario	6	0	At an unguarded railway crossing, an eastbound CP freight train struck an automobile. [47]
Coniston bus/train crash	9 February 1951	Coniston, Ontario	9	30	A westbound CPR "Montreal to Vancouver flyer" had passed through the Coniston railway station and was picking up speed when it slammed into a bus which was filled with local people, including a number of night shift workers at the local Inco smelter who were returning home from work. The crash was blamed on poor visibility. [48]
Petawawa automobile/train crash	4 August 1952	Petawawa, Southern Ontario	5	1	At an unguarded railway crossing, an eastbound CP freight train struck an automobile. [49]
Dowling truck-train collision	9 November 1973	Dowling, Ontario	0	0	On November 9, 1973, a truck-train collision caused a 1,100-gallon spill at the New Cobden Road crossing just off Highway 144 in Dowling, Ontario, more than 20 miles northwest of Sudbury. It wasn't until four years later, when traces of PCBs were found in the water table, that CP Rail, the company also involved in the Mississauga disaster, was ordered to clean up the spill. [50] [51]
Scarborough bus/train crash	12 Dec 1975	Scarborough, Toronto, Ontario	9	20	A westbound GO Transit train collided with a Toronto Transit Commission bus at the railway crossing between Danforth Road and Midland Avenue just north of the Scarborough GO Train Station. A faulty switch on the rear door had caused the bus to stop while straddling the track. [52]
1979 Turbo Train fire	29 May 1979	near Morrisburg, Ontario	0	0	A UAC TurboTrain operated by Via Rail on westbound service from Montréal to Toronto caught fire after developing an oil leak. A third of the train was totally destroyed, though there were no deaths or injuries due to a rapid evacuation. This was the last major incident for the troubled Turbo Trains, which were retired in 1982. [53]
1979 Mississauga train derailment	10 November 1979	Mississauga, Ontario	0	0	A CP freight train hauling large quantities of explosives and dangerous chemicals derailed, exploded, and caught fire in Mississauga, Ontario. Over 200,000 people were evacuated from the area, the largest evacuation in North America until Hurricane Katrina. In the negotiations that followed, CP dropped its longstanding opposition to passenger trains on the line, resulting in the opening of GO Transit Milton line service.

Iroquois fire truck/train crash 20 Mar 1981 Iroquois, Ontario 5 1 At a railway crossing, a westbound CN freight train struck a fire truck, which drove around the lowered crossing barrier after an eastbound train had passed. [54]

1995 Russell Hill subway accident 11 August 1995 Toronto, Ontario 3 30+ A southbound Line 1 Yonge–University subway train on the University line between St. Clair West and Dupont stations struck the rear of a stationary subway train.

Northlander derailment 6 February 2001 Toronto, Ontario 0 2 An Ontario Northland Railway Northlander passenger train derails in the Don Valley. 2 passengers are injured. [55]

2001 Stewiacke Via derailment 12 April 2001 Stewiacke, Nova Scotia 0 20 Via Rail's westbound passenger train Ocean travelling from Halifax to Montreal derailed after a manual switch had been tampered with. [56]

Cheakamus River derailment 5 August 2005 Cheakamus River, British Columbia 0 0 A CN freight train derailed into the Cheakamus River, leaking sodium hydroxide and killing over 500,000 fish.

2009 Oshawa derailment 5 June 2009 Oshawa, Ontario 0 0 Derailment of a train carrying dangerous goods prompts evacuation of hundreds of people from their homes. [55]

2012 Burlington Via derailment 26 February 2012 Burlington, Ontario 3 46 An eastbound Via Rail train 92 travelling from Niagara Falls to Toronto derailed east of Aldershot station.

2013 Wanup Train derailment 2 June 2013 Wanup, Ontario 0 0 A rail bridge crossing the Wanapitei River near the community of Wanup collapsed, causing a train derailment and spilling a number of cars carrying containers into the river. [57]

2013 Ottawa bus–train crash 18 September 2013 Ottawa, Ontario 6 35 Via Rail train 51 struck an OC Transpo double-decker bus en route from Ottawa to Toronto at a level crossing.

2014 Nairn derailment April 2014 near Nairn Centre, Ontario 0 0 A Huron Central Railway freight train derailed and leaked 25,000 litres (6,600 US gal) of diesel fuel into a local creek and wetland. [58]

Nipigon Train derailment 14 January 2015 near Nipigon, Ontario 0 0 Shortly before noon 22 rail cars left the CP rail track east of Nipigon, closing a section of Ontario Highway 17 as a precaution. Some of the rail cars carried propane which had caused a small leak. [59]

Ruel derailment 14 February 2015 near Ruel, Ontario 0 0 A CN train derailed at mile marker 111.7 at Gladwick, near Gogama, Ontario, spilling about 1.7 million litres of petroleum crude oil were released to either atmosphere or surface. No evacuations and injuries were reported. The fires burned for five days after the derailment. [60]

Gogama derailment 7 March 2015 near Gogama, Ontario 0 0 Several tanker cars caught fire after a CN train carrying crude oil derailed about four kilometers northwest of Gogama, Ontario prompting officials to advise nearby residents to stay indoors and avoid consuming water from local sources. Some of the rail cars that caught fire entered the Mattagami River system. [61]

Spanish derailment 1 November 2015 near Spanish, Ontario 0 0 Poor track conditions led to the derailment of a Huron Central Railway freight train. [62]

Ponton train derailment 15 September 2018 Ponton, Manitoba 1 0 A Hudson Bay Railway freight train carrying petroleum products derailed while crossing the Metishto River. The train's conductor was injured and subsequently bled to death.

Field Hill derailment 4 February 2019 Field Hill, British Columbia 3 0 A CP freight train being operated by a relief crew derailed on Field Hill near Field, British Columbia, on a section of track with a steep descending grade and several sharp curves. The 3 crew members were fatally injured in the derailment. [63]

Levack truck-train collision 22 May 2020 near Levack, Ontario 0 1 A tractor-trailer that lost control of their brakes collided with a train at a crossing on Highway 144 south of Levack, derailing an empty box car. The driver of the truck suffered minor injuries. [64]

Goderich harbour derailment 1 February 2021 Goderich, Ontario 0 0 A Goderich–Exeter Railway freight train derailed during operations at the grain terminal at the harbour, destroying the Siddall Fish House, a heritage structure which was the last surviving example of the 19th century Goderich fishing industry. [65]

2021 Crowsnest Pass derailment 12 February 2021 Crowsnest Pass 0 0 A CP freight train carrying potash derailed while travelling through the Crowsnest Pass in the Rocky Mountains. Two locomotives left the tracks along with at least 48 freight cars, with five cars falling into Crowsnest Lake. [66]

2022 Grafton Derailment 25 December 2022 Grafton, Ontario 0 0 Fourteen CN rail cars derailed in Grafton, east of Cobourg, Ontario shortly after 11 am on Christmas morning. There were no injuries. The derailment including fallen trees during a snowstorm had also resulted in many cancellations to the VIA rail service and stranding passengers. [67]

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