

Model railroads come in many different scales ("scale" refers to the relative size of a model compared to its full-size counterpart or prototype).

The primary scale used at our club is 1;8, meaning that, on average, our model locomotives and other railroad cars are one-eighth the size of the real thing. This is also called 1-1/2" scale and allows for the building of fairly large models. It also makes it possible for an engineer to actually ride aboard his train and perhaps even carry a few passengers. The gauge of our track (distance between the rails) is 7-1/2 inches. Most full size railroads have a gauge of 4' 8-1/2".

Modeling in this general size is sometimes referred to as "live steam railroading" because it is a practical size to build models of steam locomotives that use steam for propulsion. Besides steam locomotive operators, the hobby includes persons who model diesel locomotives, electric interurban and other types of railroad equipment.

Equipment ownership is not a prerequisite to join the Prairie State Railroad Club.

#### Special Notice

The operation of these scale model trains is solely for the enjoyment of their owners and guests and is not to be confused with miniature railroads that are sometimes found at amusement parks or zoos. The railroads at those venues are considerably larger and are designed specifically to haul large numbers of passengers. For that reason the club does not accommodate the general public with the exception of a few events that are conducted under the auspices of others organizations.

**Your Donation Help Us Provide Our Operation Lifesaver Railroad Safety Program!**



## We Need You!

The Prairie State Railroad Club encourages anyone who has an interest in 7-1/2" gauge model railroading to join. Members are encouraged to volunteer their time in support of the club's activities including assisting in the maintenance of the tracks/facilities and leading a hand at events.

**For more information visit our website at:**

[www.prairiestaterr.com](http://www.prairiestaterr.com)

**Or**

**Email Us At:**

[prairiestaterrclub1@gmail.com](mailto:prairiestaterrclub1@gmail.com)

**Or**

**Mail your inquiries to:**

Prairie State Railroad Club Inc.  
c/o Nancy Taft, Secretary  
2280 N 40th Road, Serena, IL 60549



501 (c) 3 Not-For-Profit Organization

**We are proud to be part of the Operation Lifesaver Program**



Teaching **Railroad Safety** To The Public.



## *Not Your Average Model Railroad*



The **Prairie State Railroad Club** is comprised of railroad enthusiasts who share a passion for the building and operation of large scale model railroad equipment.

Along with teaching **Railroad Safety** to the Public through the **Operation Lifesaver** Program.



## History

The Prairie State Railroad Club began as an informal organization in 1982, when the Northern Illinois Steam Power Club—an organization devoted to the preservation and exhibition of antique steam powered tractors and related farming implements—asked several persons active in “live steam” railroading, if they would build and operate a small loop of track to demonstrate this fascinating hobby at their annual meet held new Sycamore, Illinois.

In 1983, the club was established as an Illinois, not-for-profit corporation and ran its first trains. Due to limited space at the Sycamore site, the club began to look for a second location where a more extensive track layout could be built and used year-round.

In 1990, the club began building its “home” track at Plowman’s Park (home of Kenny Field) on the western edge of Big Rock, Illinois. Located next to a busy Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway freight line, this wooded site is the club’s main operating location. A complete trip around the railroad is about one mile.

Besides operating large scale model trains, the club members help educate the public about the role of railroads in American commerce and promoting **Operation Lifesaver** and the safe conduct around railroad facilities and crossings.

