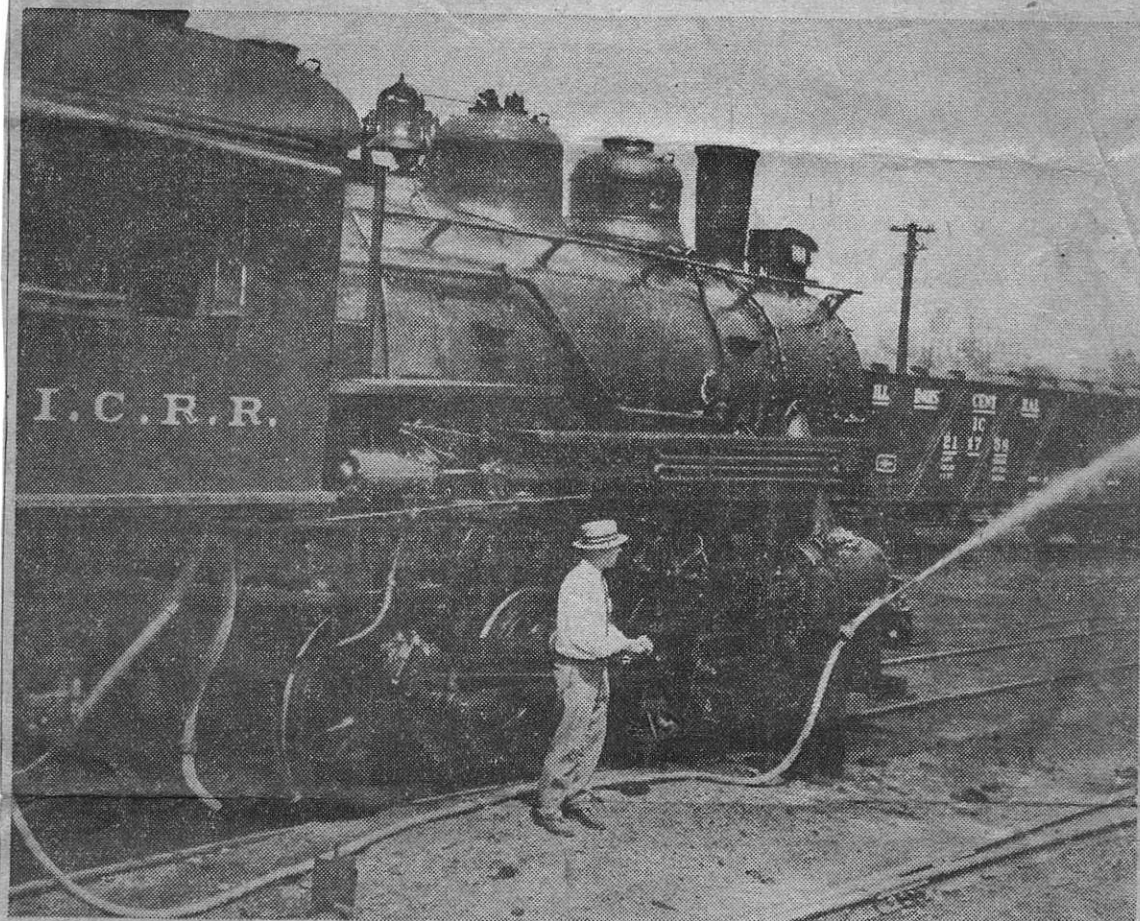


Switch Engine Crews to Cope With Fires



Fire-Fighting Locomotives To Safeguard Yards of I. C.

As extra safeguards to freight and roadside property, 46 switch engines of the I. C. Railroad at Memphis have been equipped to fight fires. Several road locomotives will be similarly equipped in a few months, according to E. D. Holcomb, local superintendent.

Quickly available in I. C. yards and at locations along the tracks, these engines are expected to be an important factor in the reduction of fire hazards. No fire plug is needed, as each engine carries its own water supply. This adds to the speed with which, upon arriving at a fire, the engine can get a stream of water into play much sooner than if an alarm had to be turned in for the city fire fighting engines, Mr. Holcomb pointed out.

Each locomotive carries a reel box containing 50 feet of specially treated cotton, rubber-lined hose, with a nozzle and necessary connection.

Normally, the injector provides pressure for pumping water from

the tender into the boiler, but when the fire fighting apparatus is in action, most of the water is diverted into the fire hose.

A stream of water can be thrown 60 feet at the rate of 100 gallons a minute. The tender on each locomotive has a capacity of from 8000 to 10,000 gallons of water, so that under ordinary conditions the supply will last at least an hour.

On the entire system of the I. C., about 300 of these engines have been equipped for fighting fire. Many are what are officially known as "road engines," all of which are in service at different terminals.

The engine and train crews have been taught how to handle the new equipment. Upon reaching a blaze these volunteer fire fighters remove the hose from the reel, attach it to the branch pipe from the pump and open the valve. A member of the engine crew directs the stream toward the fire. Fire hose and nozzles are kept in good condition and there is regular inspection each month.

Switch engines will be fire engines henceforth when a fire breaks out on the Illinois Central right-of-way or in its yards. The railroad has equipped its switch engines with hose and nozzle and each engine will be its own pumper. A. E. Fox (left), Illinois Central machinist inspector, watches A. M. Jackson, shop foreman, demonstrate the fire fighting training given the engine crews.

—Staff Photo by Stokes