

MTA 'Backfeeding' Power to Metro Blue Line as Shortages Continue



PHOTO BY JOSÉ UBALDO

UPDATE: (Jan. 18) A power shortage Thursday morning again required the MTA to reduce electrical usage along the Metro Blue Line between the Willow and Slauson stations. Rail Superintendent Jess Diaz said the brownout had no effect on train service as the Rail Operations Center backfed power into the area.

(Jan. 17) The MTA's Rail Operations Center "backfed" electrical power into an eight-mile stretch of the Metro Blue Line, today, to keep service operating normally as power shortages continued to plague the region.

Southern California Edison, declaring a Stage 3 alert, asked the MTA to reduce power along the 22-mile rail line at 5:17 a.m. By mid-morning, the reduction - which affected the Metro Blue Line yard and five of the eight stations between Willow and Firestone - was still in effect, according to Rail Superintendent Jess Diaz.

Edison made two such power reduction requests on Tuesday, an unusual occurrence. The first came at 6 a.m. and affected the stretch of rail between Willow and Slauson stations - an area that has continually been hit by rolling brownouts in recent weeks. The second request covered a period from about 5 p.m. until 10 p.m.

When power reduction - "load-shedding" -- is requested, Metro Rail supervisors take certain electrical substations off-line and backfeed power into those areas from adjacent substations. There are 14 substations along the Metro Blue Line. The MTA took seven off-line in response to today's alert.

"The system was designed to do this," Diaz said Wednesday morning. "We're not putting anyone in jeopardy and, at this time, it's not affecting the operation of the trains."

None of Edison's power reduction requests affected the Metro Green Line, Diaz said. The Metro Red Line draws its power from the City of Los Angeles DWP, which has not been subject to power reductions.

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