



A Metro Blue Line train approaches the Vernon Avenue crossing as pedestrians wait to cross safely. New sign at upper right indicates a second train is approaching the intersection.

## MTA's Prototype 'Second Train Coming' Sign Warns Pedestrians of Danger at Rail Crossings

By ED SCANNELL

(Jan. 23) The MTA is evaluating the effectiveness of a fibre optic sign designed to warn pedestrians at Metro Blue Line grade crossings that more than one train is approaching. It is the first warning sign of its kind in the United States.

Installed last June at the Vernon Avenue crossing, the "second train coming" warning sign is intended to serve as an additional deterrent to illegal crossings that sometimes result in serious injury or death.

The "second train coming" sign is activated only when two or more trains are approaching the crossing, either two Metro Blue Line trains, a Metro Blue Line train and a freight train, or, on some occasions, two Metro Blue Line trains and a freight train.

At the current volume of rail traffic on the alignment, two or more trains approach the Vernon Avenue crossing 20 to 25 times a day. A video camera has been installed to record the number of pedestrians who enter the crossing illegally when the sign is activated.

### Images of pedestrian, train

The sign, which measures three feet by four feet, includes images of a train, a pedestrian, a grade crossing and an arrow placed in the line of sight between the pedestrian and the train. The train and the arrow symbols alternate from left-to-right, warning the pedestrian to be aware of the imminent danger of a second train approaching from either direction.

Before installing the sign, the MTA surveyed community members to determine whether a sign with graphics or text would be more effective. After reviewing four potential options, most showed a preference for the design currently in use.



Mouse over image to alternate sign. On actual sign, neon yellow figures flash from black background.

A second survey will determine the public's awareness of the sign and whether pedestrians understand the sign's message. The MTA anticipates completing the evaluation and filing a report with the Federal Transit Administration this spring.

If the "second train coming" sign is found to be an effective deterrent, the MTA will seek approval from the California Public Utilities Commission to retrofit additional crossings. The Metro Blue Line includes 101 crossings along its 22-mile alignment.

The design, construction, installation, testing and evaluation of the sign was made possible by a \$200,000 grant from the FTA.

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