

Division 10 Maintenance Finds New and Better Way to Remove Chewing Gum

By JENNIFER YEH

(Feb. 14, 2003) Sticky, messy, and disgusting – chewing gum on Metro buses is an on-going problem.

Removing it was even a bigger problem – until recently.

The maintenance department at Gateway Division 10 last week began using a dry ice machine that is capable of removing gum, some graffiti and other sticky items from bus floors, seats and hard-to-reach areas.

The compact machine, which resembles a commercial rug steam cleaner, uses crushed dry ice and air power to freeze and blow away sticky items that are deeply embedded in crevices and ridges of the bus floor.

"With this machine, service attendants are able to clean six to eight buses a day," says Assistant Maintenance Manager Jim Fulkerson. "It makes up for a lot of labor time."

Machine saves time

Service Attendant Sergio Perez says on average it would take him about three hours to remove all the chewing gum manually, but the machine cuts his time by 75 percent.

"Not only is it economical, but it's a multi purpose machine," says Fulkerson. "It cleans all kinds of things."

Division 10 heard about the \$15,000 machine two years ago, but at that time, it had not yet been perfected.

Currently, Division 10 is sharing the machine with other Westside/Central divisions.

"We want to get the word out to other divisions about the machine," says Fulkerson. "Gum is a

PHOTOS: JENNIFER YEH



Before and After: Service Attendant Sergio Perez uses dry ice machine to remove gum. Below, Perez labors to remove chewing gum by hand.



Dry ice machine cuts cleaning time by 75 percent.



continuous problem and with this machine it cuts time and gets service attendants off their hands and knees."

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