

- [Want to volunteer](#) to help get Metro Buses, Trains and Red Line stations ready for when the strike ends?
[Click here for details.](#)

The Great Train Clean-up

- Volunteers wipe down Metro Red Line Stations, subway trains.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Nov. 10, 2003) - It's a big transit system, but somebody has got to clean it.

It was donuts all around, and a safety talk, before some 15 volunteer mopper/waxers and 10 supervisors lined up at 8 a.m., Saturday, to receive their Personal Protective Equipment – gloves, eyeglasses, and a mask – on the way out of Rail Division 20 offices and into the heart of heavy rail operation. Their mission: Remove gum, trash, food from subway trains and stations. Clean, scrap, sweep, disinfect, polish.

General Services Supervisor Joe Holguin teamed up with Chris Limon, Wayside Systems assistant manager, for pressure washer detail at the Civic Center Station - their first stop for the day.

The pressure washer, mounted on a truck, is a cleaning machine that commands respect. "With the pressure and the heat, it will tear a hole in your shoe," said Holguin.

A garden hose it isn't. The truck carries 250 to 300 gallons of water. A high pressure washing unit that looks and works like a



Above, Joe Holguin, left, and Chris Limon pressure wash Civic Center Station.



Supervisor Steve Mendoza, center, with subway sweepers, from left, Soledad Garcia, Monica del Toro, Daisy Corona, a masked marvel, and Lynn Montano.



Monica del Toro on the TVM keys, above, and Lynn Montano, below, on the trash drums.

high-powered rifle, it has a PSI of about 3,500. "The temp on water gauge gets up to 230; we use it at 190," said Holguin.

"A lot of the stations are accumulating dust, dirt; we have to disinfect and clean the stations. People still come around the stations and eat, and whatever.

"One thing, it gives you a real workout. After 30 minutes, your arms get real tired and you have to hang on to that gun for dear life," he said.

In ordinary times, Holguin explained, all the stations on the Metro Red, Blue Line and Green Line are pressure washed at least once a week. Some stations with especially heavy traffic are pressure washed twice a week.

Residues from the wildfires added to the grime, said Mose Houston, an MOW General Services Supervisor, who along with Steve Mendoza, also a MOW Supervisor, were organizing a work crew of five in the platform and mezzanine areas of the Civic Center Station.

After putting a shine back on the Civic Center Station, the crew headed to Pershing Square Station. "We did the same things," said volunteer Monica del Toro. "We swept, polished escalator rails, cleaned the TVMs – but Pershing Square was twice as dirty. You could eat off the floor of Civic Center Station compared to that one."



Benny Lorenzo, sr. budget analyst, above, and, below, Prabal Sanyal, Diversity and Economic Opportunity rep.



More than half done

In the meantime, 10 other volunteers were continuing the great train clean-up.

The blue-gloved hands of volunteers like auditor Albert Santos and Rail administrative analyst Mercedes Meneses whittled down the stacks of heavy-duty wipes, only to reappear in a swirling motion on soon-to-be-sparkling subway windows.

With over half of the Metro Red Line's 104 cars scrubbed clean, Santos is looking forward to another round. "Our goal is to clean all of them," he said.

The crew of ten polished off six cars on Saturday.

[Back to MTA Report](#)