

Safety 'Blitz' Targets Residents Along Light-Rail Lines

By VERONICA TORREJÓN

(Nov. 26, 2003) MTA safety ambassadors took to the streets again, last week, in an outreach blitz that targeted almost a quarter of a million children and residents along the Metro Blue and Gold Lines.

The goal of the campaign was to reacquaint residents with safety precautions that may have been forgotten over the course of the five-week strike, said Barbara Burns who is heading the Rail Safety Outreach Team.

When the strike ended Nov. 17, Burns and her staff along with eight safety ambassadors sprang into action. They distributed literature to some 175,000 students at almost 180 schools within a half-mile radius of the light-rail lines.

"We wanted to raise awareness of how to be safe in areas near the Metro Blue and Gold Lines," said Burns. "It was especially important during the strike, when the trains were not running. Now that the strike is over we plan to continue the outreach program."

The need for safety outreach programs was underscored only 12 hours after service was restored when a limousine drove through a red traffic light and collided with a Metro Gold Line train in South Pasadena.

The overall campaign is part of a Rail Safety, Education and Outreach Program in existence for more than five years. The program features public service announcements, safety presentations and tours designed to emphasize safety precautions on and around the train tracks.

" We've made a commitment to innovations in this area in order to be successful in our safety programs," said Deputy Executive Officer of Community Relations Lynda Bybee who is responsible the safety outreach program and other community relations teams.

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