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Metro Gold Line Employees Compile 327 Injury-Free Days

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 29, 2004) "Safety is everybody's business," reads a sign in the lunchroom at the Metro Gold Line yard. It's not just a slogan.

Since the beginning of this calendar year, the combined operations and maintenance team has compiled 327 workdays without a lost-time injury. That achievement was worth a celebration and praise from Metro Rail managers.

"This accomplishment set a bar for the rest of the agency," Transportation Manager Duane Martin told employees during a barbecue last Thursday.

Setting his sights on zero injuries for the remainder of the year, Martin said, "What we have accomplished makes that goal achievable."

The Gold Line's 44 maintenance employees and 50 transportation employees work three shifts in an environment rife with potential safety hazards. They're subject to trip and fall injuries walking over the tracks. Heavy equipment is constantly being moved around the yard and there are high-voltage electrical hazards.

Being aware is important

"The electric trains are very quiet and you don't always hear them moving," said Maintenance Manager Brian Rydell. "Being aware of your surroundings is very important and we train on that constantly."

"Think about what you're doing," said Rick Flores, a rail transportation operations supervisor who often investigates accidents. "If you're not sure, stop and ask."

Safety is constantly emphasized at the Gold Line division. Bulletin boards carry Local Safety Committee information. The "safety corner" shows division progress, accident claims and safety tips. The division was the first to have a safety suggestion box.



Metro Gold Line managers Brian Rydell, James Poe and Duane Martin congratulated employees on their 300-plus injury free workdays during a celebration lunch. Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis, left, talks safety with Metro Gold Line Operator Andrew Bernstein.



Both Martin and Rydell credit previous Gold Line managers – Roman Alarcon and Tom Lingenfield – for getting the division off on the right safety track and Ed Boghossian of the Rail Operations Safety team for helping keep it there.

“Each and every person at the Gold Line has looked at their job and what they have to do,” said Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis. “They’ve teamed together and said, ‘We can make a difference.’ ”

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