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## Resources

[Safety](#)
[Pressroom](#) (web)

[CEO Hotline](#)
[Metro Projects](#)
[Facts at a Glance](#)  
(web)

[Archives](#)
[Events Calendar](#)
[Research Center/  
Library](#)
[Metro Cafe](#) (pdf)

[Metro Classifieds](#)
[Retirement  
Round-up](#)

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[Strategic Plan](#) (pdf)

[Org Chart](#) (pdf)

[Policies](#)
[Training](#)
[Help Desk](#)
[Intranet Policy](#)

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Traction  
Power  
Inspectors  
Tobe  
Cowden and  
Frank  
Hernandez  
work to  
repair the  
downed  
catenary  
wire on the  
Metro Green  
Line east of  
the Aviation  
station.

## Wayside Systems' 36-Hour Effort Restores Green Line Service

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Dec. 3, 2004) Metro Green Line service is back to normal, today, following a 36-hour effort by Light Rail Wayside Systems employees who repaired damage caused by a train that ripped out a 450-foot section of electrical wire.

The incident happened at 5:30 p.m., Nov. 30, when the train's pantograph, a metal rod that draws power from the overhead catenary wire, somehow became entangled in the wire as the westbound train approached the Aviation station.

The electrical wire, under 8,000 pounds tension, snapped, but the train – hurtling along at 50 to 55 mph – continued forward carrying the wire with it and tearing steel arms off six or more catenary poles. No one was hurt in the incident.

A bus bridge transported passengers to LAX and other destinations for a short while, until the Rail Operations Center set up single-tracking on the eastbound track around the Aviation station.

## Worked long shifts

"Our managers and crews were working 12- and 14-hour shifts to repair the damage," says Rob Chappell, deputy executive officer, Rail Operations.

Working in bone-chilling overnight temperatures, Metro Rail crews de-energized the catenary wire, cut it and spliced it and replaced all the damaged hardware on the poles. They then re-strung the wire to the original 8,000 pounds tension. After testing, the repaired stretch was again deemed safe for operation.

The 25-member Traction Power group bore the main responsibility for repairs. Supporting the 'round-the-clock effort were the 20 members of the Track Department and the Signal Department's 20 employees.

### **Difficult circumstances**

"Everyone did an excellent job under difficult circumstances," says Chappell. "They all had a can-do attitude and made sure everyone worked safe on the job."

Regular Metro Green Line service resumed at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, Dec. 2.

"The goal of Rail Operations is to move people and we have to do whatever it takes to make that happen," says Chappell. "We're the people who work behind the scenes to get things done and get them done right."

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