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Metro Rail officials in orange vests assess damage to Metro Gold Line overhead electrical wires while members of a contractor's crew, in yellow slickers, consider how to remove fallen trees from the right-of-way. Sheriff's Lt. Mike Parker, left, photographs the scene.



PHOTOS: JOSE UBALDO

Downed Trees Halt Gold Line Service; Buses Trapped in Malibu

- [Safety officials close road into Gold Line yard.](#)

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Jan. 11, 2005) Three trees that broke loose from a rain-soaked hillside and fell across Metro Gold Line electrical wires in South Pasadena at 8:20 a.m., Monday, halted through service on the line for 10 hours.

While Metro Rail traction power and track personnel worked to clear the blockage, Bus Operations Control set up a bus bridge between Mission station on the north and Southwest Museum station on the south, with stops at the Highland Park station to take on passengers.

Through service at a reduced speed of 35 mph resumed at 6:20 p.m. when the trees

were cleared from the Gold Line right-of-way and the overhead catenary wires had been inspected and declared safe for operation.

Divisions 1, 2, 3, 9 and 10 provided a total of 6 buses for the emergency service. Service was back to normal Tuesday morning.



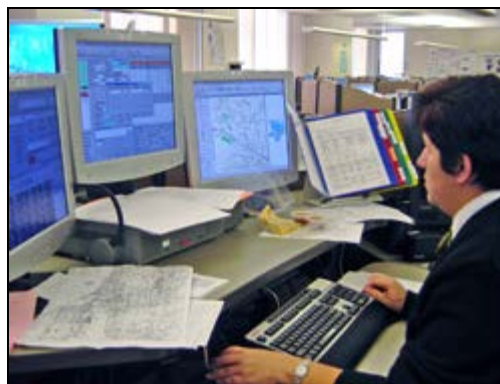
A heavy oak and two smaller eucalyptus trees toppled onto Metro Gold Line power lines in South Pasadena when soggy ground gave way beneath their roots.

Buses trapped on PCH

Five Metro Buses from divisions 6 and 10 were trapped Pacific Coast Highway for several hours, Monday afternoon, when power lines fell across the road north of Pepperdine University in Malibu and a landslide pushed a large rock onto the road near Temescal Canyon Road in Pacific Palisades.

Three of the Line 434 buses were restricted to a nine-mile stretch of highway between the downed power lines and the rock, while two others were between the downed lines and the western end of the bus route. BOC directed the buses to provide shuttle service in their limited areas until the road was cleared.

PHOTO: BILL HEARD



Caltrans workers escorted passengers around the large rock to make their bus connections. One bus was positioned near Pepperdine to serve as temporary shelter while passengers waited for the electrical wires to be cleared from the roadway.

TOS Cynthia Saucedo of the Bus Operations Center monitored Metro Bus operations in the San Fernando Valley, Tuesday morning. Buses on four well-traveled lines in the Sepulveda Basin and in Glendale were being detoured due to high water or landslides.

Meanwhile, Metro Bus operations experienced the usual flood-related detours around the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area in the San Fernando Valley. Buses were rerouted in other parts of the service area due to flooded intersections.

Rewriting deep-water rules

The deep waters caused by the storms have required Bus Operations to rewrite the rules dictating where Metro Buses can be operated during wet weather, according to Tom Jasmin, director of Operations Control.

Previously, the rules allowed buses to operate in 18-inch-deep water, but low-floor buses can't be operated in water more than 12 inches deep without water washing in through the doors.

"That six inches is a big difference in getting people through," says Jasmin. Future detour notices will reflect the new deep-water rules.

The storm that brought some 4.5 inches of rain into the area since Friday caused an hour-long power outage that required single-tracking at the Metro Red Line's Wilshire/Vermont station.

Metro Contract bus service experienced problems in the South Bay and in the San Fernando Valley.

Line 225/226 in San Pedro and the Palos Verdes Peninsula had to detour around a major sinkhole on Western Avenue and a mud slide on Palos Verdes Drive South. Near LAX, Line 625 had to cope with major delays due to flooding.

In the Valley, Griffith Park roads were closed, affecting operations on Line 96. Line 218, which runs from Studio City to Cedars-Sinai Hospital, was cut in half by flooding. Buses from the hospital can only go as far as Sunset Boulevard on the south. The line, which starts at Ventura Boulevard on the north, now deadends at Mulholland Drive.

Road into Gold Line yard closed

The Metro Gold Line yard lost power for a while on Monday, but a more pressing problem is the closing of the road leading into the facility, due to rock and mud slides and concerns about the stability of the hill above the road.

Safety officials directed employees to park at the yard's entrance and use the emergency walkway to the main building. The train car wash also should not be used until its safety can be assured.

Arthur Winston Division 5, which was hard hit in the earlier round of storms, experienced a four-and-a-half hour electrical outage on Sunday, but was in full operation Monday.

The protracted stormy weather also has curtailed most construction work on the Metro Orange Line and the Metro Gold Line's Eastside Extension.

Rain-related damage between Moorpark and Camarillo curtailed Metrolink operations from the Montalvo, Oxnard and Camillaro stations. Metrolink trains between Los Angeles and Burbank were cancelled as were other trains on the Ventura County line.

Weather forecasters are calling the July 2004 to June 2005 period the 13th wettest year on record, with a total of 21.9 inches of rain having fallen at USC – 8 inches more than the normal 5 inches. Predictions are for dry weather from today through Friday.

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