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Grocery Shoppers Soon Will ‘Check Out’ Metro Rail Safety Ads

By JIMMY STROUP

(May 3, 2006) Starting May 29, 11 area Albertsons supermarkets will feature Metro Rail safety advertising on televisions at their checkout stands. The ads are meant to increase rail safety awareness.

The 15-second ads were the brainchild of Barbara Burns, assistant Community Relations manager, who thought up the idea while standing in line at a grocery store that featured in-store advertising on TVs at the checkout.

“Because they’re only 15-second spots, they happen really fast and people won’t turn away or get bored,” Burns said. “We have six different spots so they’ll rotate and you won’t be seeing the same one over and over.”

Extracted from the award-winning, live-action film on rail safety produced by Metro and now licensed to other transit agencies, the short ads will run 10 times an hour, all day, from the end of May through December.

‘20 spots per hour’

“In July and September, when kids are going to school or getting out of school, they’ll be running 20 spots per hour,” said Burns, who hopes the impact will be greatest among children and young people.

The Albertsons stores that are running the advertisements are all within a two-mile radius of either the Metro Blue, Gold or Green Lines, or of the Exposition Line or the Eastside Extension, ensuring that the viewers who frequent the store and also live around light rail tracks and trains will be getting the full impact of the safety messages.

“The estimates are that just under 4 million people should see the videos during the ad period,” Burns said.

And at just under \$30,000 for the entire deal, Burns said the price tag for the whole project is a steal compared to comparable advertising among more traditional lines.

“It’s tremendously cheaper than the advertising in either print, or television or radio,” she said. “And you have a captive audience – people standing in line at the checkout stands.”

Rail safety ads will be seen at Albertsons in Long Beach, Highland Park, Baldwin Hills, Montebello, Paramount, Norwalk, South Gate, Alhambra, Hawthorne and Los Angeles.

The short videos feature scenes of children playing, people driving and city shots, all near light rail tracks. The music and sound effects add to the image and printed messages on the screen, indicating that

safety comes first around railroad tracks and trains.

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