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Supervisor Gloria Molina, who also chairs the Board of Directors, and CEO Roger Snoble presented an "Outstanding Safety Achievement Award" to Eastside LRT Contractors, the joint venture construction company. Project Director Mike Aparicio accepted on behalf of the company.



Photos by Luis Inzunza

Eastside Workers Reach 1 Million Hours with no Lost-Time Injuries

- Achievement astonishes long-time safety execs

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 18, 2006) The workers building the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension have set a record that has astonished long-time construction safety executives – they had no lost-time injuries in the one million work-hours they've spent on the job since July 2004.

"This is the first time in my experience this has happened," said Metro Construction Safety Manager James Brown, who has worked heavy construction jobs all over the country for the past 25 years.

During a million hours celebration barbecue at the worksite last Friday, Brown said teams photograph the job each week looking for safety hazards and discuss them at weekly "toolbox" safety meetings. "The foremen and supervisors, the craftspeople are doing self-inspections,

checking themselves to make sure they're safe."



CEO Roger Snoble congratulated the Eastside Extension construction workers for their "major achievement in construction safety."

Metro Construction Chief Rick Thorpe called the worker's safety record "an incredible accomplishment. One million hours with no lost-time injuries is unheard of in the industry, especially on a job that's as complicated as this one," with tunneling, cut-and-cover and surface construction going on simultaneously.

Eli Choueiry, the deputy executive officer who has daily oversight of the Eastside project, said, "It's the awareness of safety that we're bringing to a much higher level than we have in the past. We stay on top of it with an excellent team of safety managers and enforce safety 100 percent."

Takes safety very seriously

In a brief speech congratulating the construction workers, CEO Roger Snoble praised the workers' accomplishment, calling it a "major achievement in construction safety." He noted that, "As CEO, I am the chief safety officer and it's something I take very seriously."

"Safety is hugely important," he added. "At Metro, safety is Number One and it always will be."



Supervisor Gloria Molina, who represents East LA, called the million-hour safety record "a milestone" and said the workers have been good neighbors in the community.

Supervisor Gloria Molina, who now chairs the Board of Directors and also represents the Eastside community, told the assembled workers, "To work a million hours with this kind of safety record is a milestone, not just for this organization, but for this kind of work throughout the country. Each of you played an important role, because this is a cooperative effort. You have to be a team."

Molina said there have been few complaints from members of the East LA community about the huge construction project. "People really appreciate them as neighbors. Such a tremendous safety record is very meaningful, not only to Metro, but also to the neighborhood."

The six-mile Eastside Extension will open to the public in late 2009 and will serve the Little Tokyo/Arts District, Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles communities with eight new train stations.

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