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Maria Monroy, division stenographer, offers hash browns and pancakes at the Sept. 12 breakfast thanking bus operators for fewer accidents.

*Photos by
Andrew Carrasco and
Jonathon Leifer*

Division 2 Provides Early (Yawn!) Breakfast for Safer Bus Operators

- Accident rate drops to 17 in August

(Sept. 18, 2008) An early—very early—breakfast at Crossroads Depot Division 2 on Sept. 12 congratulated the division's operators for a drop in accidents during August.

Diane Frazier, transportation manager, had repeatedly suggested to the operators that if their August accident rate was in the "teens," a celebratory breakfast would be in their near future.

"Over the past 13 months, the division's monthly average was 24.38," explained Andrew Carrasco, Division 2's assistant transportation manager. The division's annual goal is to reduce that average to 21 or fewer accidents per month.

"At the midway point of August, we were sitting at just six accidents," Carrasco said. "During our weekly Safety/Rap Sessions, we started to 'leak' the possibility of a breakfast. Operators were teasing managers that they were going to have to come in really earlier to cook them breakfast."

Although several accidents late in August created some nail-biting, the division logged 17 accidents and forced some pre-dawn rising times.



Alex Clifford, General Manager of Gateways Cities Sector, browns links for the Sept. 12 breakfast, which began serving Division 2 staff at 3 a.m.

Determined to be ready to feed operators as early as 3 a.m., Frazier arrived at 1:20 a.m. The breakfast's cooks were already working.

"Our operators . . . love to see us managers get up and out there early in the morning with them, and it's a signal that we entirely support them in accomplishing the overall mission of the division, sector and Metro,"

Carrasco said.

The temporary short order cooks served breakfast (yawn!) until 7 a.m., using 420 eggs, 40 pounds of bacon and sausage, 320 hash browns, 300 pancakes and 30 gallons of orange juice and coffee. Mechanics and security officers were also fed.



(From left) Maria Ramirez, bus operator; Robert Gonzales, bus operator and head cook; Sharon Bell, bus operator; Robert Rodriguez, bus operator and UTU representative; and Catherine White, bus operator, may be regretting rising so early. Photos: Andrew Carrasco and Jonathon Leifer

Besides Carrasco and Frazier, the "core team" included Maria Monroy, division stenographer; Robert Gonzales, bus operator and head cook; Robert Rodriguez, bus operator and UTU representative; and Catherine White and Sharon Bell, bus operators.

The core team arrived at 1 a.m. to set up and begin cooking with Alex Clifford, General Manager of the Gateway Cities Sector, and Tammy Rice, safety specialist. Jonathon Leifer, transitional work coordinator, slept in and arrived at 2 a.m.

"In essence, our breakfast was both a reward and an incentive for a job well done and also a kick-off to accomplish division goals for the coming year," said Frazier, noting that the breakfast was part of an ongoing incentive program to increase safety consciousness.

"Like the other downtown divisions, we have some challenges with accidents because of the area we operate through," she said, pointing to heavy traffic and narrow streets."

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