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Press Release

May 8, 2008

LIRR

IMMEDIATE

MTA LIRR To Increase Safety Presence at Two Nassau County Grade Crossings

Following recent incidents at the Atlantic Avenue grade crossing in East Rockaway and the Stewart Avenue grade crossing in Bethpage, the MTA Long Island Rail Road will be increasing its police and safety presence at these crossings in a concerted effort to bolster safety awareness. On May 2, a train struck a truck at Atlantic Avenue that had improperly entered the crossing. On May 5, a bicyclist went around the gates at the Stewart Avenue crossing and was hit by a train.

Beginning immediately, additional MTA Police patrols will be assigned to these crossings to step up enforcement of vehicle and traffic safety laws. In addition, LIRR System Safety Department personnel will be holding Operation Lifesaver education days at the crossings in the near future. Operation Lifesaver is a non-profit international public information, education, engineering and enforcement program dedicated to reducing crashes, injuries, and fatalities at highway-rail grade crossings.

"Motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians using these crossings, as well as any of the railroad's almost 300 other grade crossings, are urged to exercise appropriate caution and observe proper safety rules when traveling," said LIRR President Helena Williams. "They risk not only stiff penalties but, more importantly, their lives and the lives of others when they ignore safety rules."

The LIRR advises that motorists should only enter a railroad crossing when the gates are up and there is a clear exit from the crossing unimpeded by roadway traffic. Additionally, under the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Safety Law Section 1170, a motorist driving around, through or under a down railroad crossing gate faces penalties ranging from a \$150 fine and 30 days in jail to a fine of \$750 dollars and six months in jail plus points on their license.