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Press Release

July 11, 2008

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IMMEDIATE

First Edition of MTA New York City Transit's Subway Gazette Rolls off Press

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Looking for something breezy and informative to read during your commute? Well, MTA New York City Transit has just the thing - the first edition of the Subway Gazette. The Gazette is a mock newspaper outlining issues of importance within the subway system, printed on a car card and prominently displayed.

The initial run highlights all of the problems that can arise when careless customers discard trash improperly. When riders fail to hit that easy lay-up into platform trash receptacles, trash often ends up on the platform and then gets blown onto the roadbed by passing trains. Once on the tracks, trash can help spark track fires or clog drains along the roadbed and that can lead to flooding. Smoke conditions and flooding can and do lead to delays in train service and, in the case of fires, they can be downright dangerous.

"The Subway Gazette is an entertaining yet informative way of reminding our customers that carelessly-discarded trash, aside from being an environmental nuisance, can also lead to service problems," noted Paul Fleuranges, Vice President of Corporate Communications for NYC Transit.

Fire and smoke conditions along the track and in stations have been a leading cause of subway delays for several years, and 2007 was unfortunately no different. Last year 4,881 trains were delayed as a result of fire/smoke conditions. That's up from 2006 when fire/smoke conditions caused 3,484 delayed trains. Compared to 2003 when fire/smoke conditions delayed 2,826 trains, those delays have risen by 73%.

"Newspapers and subway tracks are not a good combination," said Steven A. Feil, Senior Vice President of NYC Transit's Department of Subways. "The papers can cause fires when ignited by electrical equipment and, when it rains, can lead to flooding when they block drainage areas."

Between 2003 and 2007, the amount of trash removed from the system has increased 17%, soaring from 15,300 tons in 2003 to 17,862 tons in 2007.

It's important to note that the refuse tossed into trash cans isn't just shipped to landfills; in fact, a large percentage of subway litter actually gets recycled. Officials add that while the amount of refuse removed from the system has increased, so has the amount of recyclables recovered.

Of the 15,300 tons of trash collected from the subway in 2003, 5,900 tons were recycled. In 2007, 17,862 tons of subway trash was collected and 8,930 tons were recycled; thus diverted from local landfills. "Through an aggressive post-collection recycling program, NYC Transit recycles about 50% of everything our customers throw away," says Michael G. Zacchea, Assistant Chief Operations Officer of NYC Transit's Asset Recovery Unit. "But we're not stopping there, and we are setting our sights even higher in the future," added Zacchea.

The car card, which has pictures of a smoky track fire, reads "Litter causes track fires. That's bad news. Please put newspapers and other refuse in trash cans." It is part of the Your city. Your subway. Your station. Your LITTER. campaign.