



MTA Press Releases

Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

Harmon Shop Gets MTA Chairman's Safety Award

The 450 men and women who work in the Maintenance of Equipment Department at the Harmon Shop & Yard and in Poughkeepsie have been awarded the 2007 MTA Chairman's Group Achievement in Safety Award.

From 2000 to 2007, these employees have reduced injuries of all kinds by a whopping 78%. When you look only at injuries that resulted in "lost time," meaning the employee had to be off work to recuperate, the reduction was even greater – 92% during the same eight-year period. Last year there were only 3 lost-time injuries, compared to 38 in 2000.

"We are committed to making all our facilities injury-free," said MTA Chairman Elliot Sander. "And it gives me great pleasure and pride to recognize this exceptional team effort at the Harmon Shop."

John Militano, of Carmel, NY, who manages the sprawling, century-old Harmon shop, said that a concerted effort began in 2001 to reduce injuries.

"We started to work on resetting employees' attitudes about working safely every day," said Militano, the M of E Facilities Director. "We had to make sure people had the right tools, we revamped work processes, and made safety routines a consistent part of daily activities," Militano said. They began a safety slogan contest and the witty reminders hang all over the shop.

"People appreciate being told 'good job.' So we started to recognize their safety achievements on a regular basis too – and that simple recognition really helped to heighten everyone's awareness of maintaining a safe workplace." This award is hard-earned and well-deserved.

MTA Chairman Dale Hemmerdinger presented the award Wednesday at the MTA Chairman's Excellence in Safety a ceremony in Grand Central Terminal.

"I believe that safety is the MTA's highest priority. Certainly the work MTA employees do day in and day out - providing more than 2.5 billion safe annual rides to the public – proves that," Hemmerdinger said.