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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Working Hard to Provide Service During Storm

Metro-North Railroad and Long Island Rail Road Operating On Reduced Schedules for Monday Morning Rush Hour

This weekend, MTA personnel are working hard to provide service today and into tomorrow morning's rush hour for those who must travel during this major winter snow storm. Throughout the storm, MTA customers should visit the MTA's website, mta.info, for minute-by-minute service status updates and travel advisories. Because platforms and staircases may be icy and slippery, customers are advised to use extra caution when at stations.

Monday Morning Rush Hour

New York City Transit subways will operate on a normal weekday schedule, while buses will operate on a Sunday schedule. In anticipation of lower-than-usual ridership, the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad will operate on reduced schedules tomorrow. The Long Island Rail Road will operate on a holiday schedule, and Metro-North will operate on a regular Sunday schedule. Railroad schedules are available in the current timetables or via the mta.info schedules page. Each railroad will charge off-peak fares all day.

LIRR Overnight Service

While the LIRR will take all measures possible to keep train service operating throughout the system, to ensure customer and employee safety, the LIRR may temporarily suspend train service this evening if snow accumulations reach between 10 and 13 inches as predicted. These temporary suspensions will continue until safe and reliable service can be restored. LIRR personnel will be working throughout the storm to clear snow from the tracks and from the electrified third rail.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels

Motorists are urged not to drive unless they absolutely have to, and should take mass transit if they have to travel. For those motorists who must be out on the roads, the MTA's bridges and tunnels expect to operate normally tomorrow, with lanes fully cleared of snow and ice. MTA officials are closely monitoring wind levels and may issue travel restrictions as warranted.

Phase I speed restrictions are implemented when winds reach between 30 mph and 49 miles per hour when roadways are wet or icy. Other factors, such as wind direction, are also considered in making this determination. Speed restrictions are then relayed to motorists via electronic signs and stationary flip-board signs. Phase II restrictions, which are issued when sustained winds reach 50 miles per hour, bar certain vehicles, including tractor trailers, motorcycles, step vans, motor homes and mini-buses, from crossing the bridges.

Winter Storm Preparation

MTA New York City Transit began preparations at the beginning of the weekend. Subways personnel prepared de-icers, snow throwers and additional track sweepers for deployment against what could amount to 16 inches of snowfall and wind-driven drifts of several feet. Maintenance workers have been assigned to 12-hour shifts and managers called in from vacation to deal with the first significant snowfall of the season.

To ensure that the fleet is available and ready for rush-hour service on Monday morning, the process of moving trains usually parked outdoors to underground locations began on Saturday and continued through yesterday. Storing trains underground requires local-only service in some locations. Snow throwers are in place in vulnerable portions of the system such as the Bronx' Dyre Avenue Line, the Rockaways in Queens and the Sea Beach Line in Brooklyn. They will begin their work once accumulations have reached four inches. Additionally, there will be strong focus on keeping station staircases and outdoor platforms cleared and salted.

A portion of the subway fleet on lines that travel outdoors and all Staten Island Railway trains are operating with scraper shoes to help prevent ice build up on the electrified third rail. Ice on the third rail can cause an interruption of electrical power resulting in stalled trains. To power work equipment, diesel locomotives are fueled and ready for service.

The Department of Buses has installed chains on the wheels of articulated buses and buses that will be in operation during the overnight. Particular attention is being paid to routes with hilly sections. Salt Truck crews are scheduled. Bus Command is providing overall coverage in addition to separate

Snow Desk coverage in the divisions. To help keep bus service moving, a Department of Sanitation representative is on duty at the Bus Command Center to assist in deployment of snow removal forces to problem areas.

The Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad have specialized equipment to clear snow from rails. Many of the LIRR's electric trains are fitted with special third rail scraper shoes to reduce ice buildup on the third rail. All Metro-North electric trains are fitted with special third rail shoes that have holes in them so snow does not stick to them and build up, which interferes with the contact. Metro-North trains with pantographs keep moving all night clearing catenary wires on the New Haven Line. Patrol trains move through the territory, dropping off and picking up employees to clean/salt/sand station platforms.

The gears in railroad switches, the moving pieces of track that allow trains to change from one track to another, are treated with ethylene/propylene glycol to keep them free of ice. Switch heaters, like the wiring in a heating pad, are turned on, and switches are kept moving throughout the night to help keep them from freezing.

In addition to its fleet of 102 snow-fighting trucks, MTA Bridges and Tunnels uses a system of technologically-advanced weather sensors to help keep motorists safe. All seven MTA bridges use small, rocket-like atmospheric weather sensors that deliver highly-accurate weather information, including wind velocity, wind direction, humidity and precipitation, via wireless communication. Other sensors are embedded in the roadway and on the snow-fighting trucks to monitor icing conditions on the roadways.