



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) ▼

Press Release

April 25, 2011

[Metro-North](#)

IMMEDIATE

Away Go Troubles Down The Drain

Everything is going down the drain in the Bronx - and that's a good thing for MTA Metro-North Railroad.

To combat flooding along the tracks, Metro-North initiated an aggressive and ongoing program of drain system inspections and accelerated cleaning and maintenance. The railroad also has formed partnerships with local communities and government agencies to work together in battling flooding in its nearly 3,000 square-mile territory.

The railroad compiled a list of key flood locations, and Mott Haven Junction in the Bronx was the first trouble spot to be tackled. Mott Haven is flood prone because it is situated at low spot at the bottom of a slope that during intense storms gets periodic overflow from nearby New York City street drain systems.

Mott Haven is a very busy junction with more than 700 trains moving through the area every day. Because the Hudson, Harlem and New Haven lines converge at Mott Haven, flooding at this critical juncture has halted trains system-wide more than once. In August 1999, the water was waist high!

The flood remediation project at Mott Haven was complicated. Work was scheduled on nights and weekends so that there was no impact on train service and employees worked around the clock to take advantage of lighter train traffic. The \$2.8 million job was done by Thalle Transit Co. of Yonkers. First, Metro-North workers surveyed the territory to find old manhole covers that may have been covered over during the 130 years that the yard has been an active railroad.

Then work began with removal of all debris from existing drains. Then, working in off peak periods when train traffic is less frequent, track workers restored about half a mile of key drainage by replacing or relining pipes that lay buried between a vast network of interlocking tracks.

In the area under the bridge that carries East 149th Street 20 feet above the yard, new "beehive grate" manhole covers were installed in the yard. Because of their domed shape, they don't clog as easily during heavy rains.

In addition, a High-Water Alert System, (a float switch) was installed at a catch basin under the 149th Street Bridge, which is the lowest point in the Mott Haven area and is generally the first place to flood. This will give advance warning when water gets high to allow maintenance employees to mobilize.

North of Mott Haven, where the Harlem and New Haven lines run on the same tracks, Metro-North installed three connectors to divert storm water runoff into the city's treatment plant. This was crucial because in the area between Mott Haven and Fordham, the tracks are below street level in a "cut." About 5,000 feet of new drain pipe to help prevent water from pooling along the tracks during rainstorms.

Workers increased the height of an existing retaining wall at Fordham by about 18 inches and at Claremont Parkway, created a wall of concrete barriers and installed additional drainage piping to block and channel water more efficiently to existing drains.

A little farther north on the Hudson Line, at Ossining, where the Sing Sing Creek Channel often overflows and floods a 1,200-foot-long stretch of tracks as well as the station parking lot, work is underway to make that point more flood-resistant. A design is underway for channel improvements, including a thorough cleaning and lining the channel with concrete. Work is to begin in 2012.

Also on the Hudson Line, Metro-North partnered with the City of Yonkers to combat flooding around the Glenwood and Ludlow stations. In the Glenwood area, the city strengthened a nearby slope that had washed away during an earlier storm. The City also cleaned the catch basins, while Metro-North built a retaining wall at the bottom of the slope to divert any runoff water. Once funding is available, Yonkers will also undertake drainage improvements around Ludlow Station.

The railroad will continue to reach out to communities in proximity to the Bronx River, Hudson River, and Saw Mill River asking that during any requests for new construction permits in these areas, careful attention is paid to include parameters for storm water runoff containment.

These proactive efforts will go a long way to combat future floods and help Metro-North continue to provide reliable train service during good weather and bad.