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Press Release

August 26, 2011

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

7:45 p.m. Recap of MTA Hurricane Plans

Systemwide Shutdown Begins at 12 Noon Tomorrow;

New Yorkers Urged Not to Wait Until Last Minute to Evacuate;

Some Fare and Toll Collection Is Suspended

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority reminds customers that all MTA services will begin an orderly shutdown at about 12 noon tomorrow in advance of the arrival of Hurricane Irene. These actions are consistent with the MTA's Hurricane Plan, designed to protect the safety of customers, employees and equipment, and ensure the fastest and safest possible restoration of service after the storm. In addition, the MTA is suspending certain fares and tolls in order to facilitate evacuations.

Details of the MTA's service plan for Hurricane Irene are as follows:

Preparation/Evacuation

In order to facilitate the mandatory evacuations in New York City and Long Island, the MTA will suspend collection of certain fares and tolls.

Tolls are suspended at the Cross Bay Veterans Memorial Bridge and the Marine Parkway-Gil Hodges Memorial Bridge.

Starting at 8 p.m. today:

Toll collection will be suspended on the Verrazano-Narrows, Throgs Neck, and Bronx-Whitestone Bridges.

Fares will be suspended on buses throughout the city.

Fares will be suspended for subway and rail passengers at stations in mandatory evacuation areas.

Those who wish to evacuate using MTA services should seek out existing services and routes. In addition, the Long Island Rail Road is operating special shuttle trains between Far Rockaway and Valley Stream to assist in evacuation efforts. Additional crews will be available to augment bus service tomorrow morning.

Pets will be allowed on board MTA vehicles. Dogs must be leashed and, if possible should be muzzled. Cats and other pets should be in carriers. Scheduled weekend construction projects have been cancelled to allow for potential evacuation and suspension of service. All MTA construction sites are being secured, with cranes lowered.

MTA stations and rail terminals are not designated shelters and will be closed in the event of a service shutdown. Those in need of assistance will be directed to nearby shelters.

Safe and Orderly Shutdown

Subways, buses, LIRR, Metro-North, and Staten Island Railway will begin shutting down service at about 12 noon tomorrow. People who need to travel are encouraged to do so as soon as possible and not wait until the last train or bus is departing. Those who do not need to travel are advised to stay put until the storm has passed.

Details on the last LIRR trains to run are here: <http://bit.ly/nVljTK>

Details on the last Metro-North trains to run are here: <http://bit.ly/opXOfw>

Restrictions or closures at MTA Bridges and Tunnels are likely. MTA bridges will close if winds reach sustained speeds of 60 mph, but this does not preclude them from closing sooner if high winds are coupled with other weather-related conditions including flooding. Each of MTA's seven bridges and two tunnels will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

There will be no scheduled Access-A-Ride pickups after 12 noon on Saturday but Access-A-Ride will be working with NYC OEM to provide vehicles for the evacuation for disabled residents. There will be no Access-A-Ride service on Sunday, August 28 or Monday morning, August 29.

The MTA is working with law enforcement across the region to protect infrastructure during a system-wide shutdown.

Safe and Orderly Restoration

As soon as conditions allow following the storm, MTA personnel will evaluate damage and begin implementing its plan to restore service as quickly as possible while protecting the safety of all involved.

Even with minimal damage this is expected to be a lengthy process that will impact service following the storm. MTA riders are urged to call 511 and stay tuned to [mta.info](https://www.mta.info) and local news broadcasts before traveling.

State helicopters will be deployed to assist the MTA in assessing storm damage