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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

### MTA Long Island Rail Road says: Here's What You Need to Know before the Snow

#### *In the Event of Winter Storm, Trains Will Run as Long As It Is Safe to Do So; But Snow Accumulations of 10-13 Inches May Result in Service Suspensions*

With high winds and heavy rain forecast for this evening and the overnight period, MTA Long Island Rail Road has extra work crews at the ready to respond quickly to reports of downed trees and wires as well as damaged crossing gates. Although no snow accumulation is expected, the LIRR is taking steps to deal with icy conditions on the rails and at its stations should temperatures drop below the freezing mark.

Advance preparations for the upcoming winter storm season are also complete and the LIRR's dedicated workforce is ready to serve, armed with the latest in snow-fighting equipment and a public communications strategy that promises to keep customers informed about train service around the clock.

"We will be closely monitoring each weather event and letting customers know as early as possible how the weather is affecting train service," said LIRR President Helena Williams. "Our goal is to run our trains as long as it is safe for our customers, employees and equipment. But we want to state our policy clearly that if snow accumulations reach the 10-13 inch range, service suspensions may be necessary. Experience tells us that this is the prudent course rather than risk trains stuck in deep snow, stranding customers and crews."

Williams said such precautions also ensure a swifter return of train service once the storm has passed. In the event the magnitude of the storm (due to high winds, snowdrifts, heavy icing conditions, etc.) forces a system-wide service suspension on all 11 branches and 700 miles of track, the LIRR wants customers to know the many ways they can get up to the minute information about the progress of recovery efforts aimed at clearing snow and restoring service.

#### LIRR's Storm Strategy

Here are the steps the LIRR is taking to ensure an effective response to a winter storm

- Thousands of LIRR employees are on alert for emergency duty, from pre-storm operations through the tough task of digging out the system, addressing storm damage and restoring train service in the event of a major snowfall. Not only does that include train crews, track workers, signal maintainers, train mechanics, etc., but also Customer Assistance personnel who will be on hand during the AM and PM Peak at Penn Station and Jamaica Station.
- A pre-storm plan in which heaters will be turned on to prevent switches from freezing, third rail, switches and train doors will be treated with anti-freeze agents, train air brakes will be purged of moisture to prevent them from freezing and trains equipped with special scraper shoes will be deployed to help reduce third rail icing.
- To clear snow from tracks and train yards, the LIRR will roll out the latest addition to its snow battle arsenal, the Nordco Snow Fighter. The Snow Fighter is a powerful, rail-bound plow equipped with heavy-duty snow wings, each with a reach of up to 16 and-a-half feet. The wings flank a multi-directional front end plow and the Snow Fighter can work at speeds up to 30 mph. The Snow Fighter is supplemented by seven rail-bound snow blowers powered by jet engines, three of them new this year, two hi-rail jet snow blowers (which can be deployed via roadway to a rail location), four snow brooms and three cold-air blowers. See the LIRR's snow-fighting equipment at [www.mta.info/lirr](http://www.mta.info/lirr).
- LIRR is prepared to keep station waiting rooms open around the clock where needed to provide shelter for customers waiting for trains.
- Armed with conventional snowplows, blowers and shovels, other crews will be positioned to be ready to clear platforms and stairways.

#### Your Safety Is Important to Us

When at stations during a storm, we urge customers to allow extra time for traveling, listen closely to announcements, stay clear of the platform edges, use handrails on staircases and walk carefully when entering or exiting stations and boarding or leaving trains.

#### Look for LIRR's Storm Recovery Timetables

In the event of a service suspension, customers should check the Storm Recovery Timetables posted on the LIRR's homepage at [www.mta.info/lirr](http://www.mta.info/lirr). Just click on the "Modified Schedules" box at the bottom of the page. The Storm Recovery Timetables were adopted last year as a way to let customers know the modified level of LIRR service to expect either during a storm or as we come out of a storm. Service would return first on the LIRR's four largest branches, Port Washington, Babylon, Ronkonkoma and Huntington.

Modified schedule information, when implemented, will be available on electronic signs at stations and via telephone by calling or texting CooCoo, that's 266266, and almost instantly receive the departure or arrival time of the next three trains at the desired station.

#### 24/7 Customer Communications

The Long Island Rail Road is the industry trend setter in the development of 24/7 customer communications beginning with round-the-clock staffing of its Public Information Office located at the heart of its train operations center at Jamaica Station. Thousands and thousands of LIRR customers are receiving free, real-time service alerts direct from the Public Information Office via email or text message. You can sign up too at the LIRR website. The

same updates are posted on the website, a wise first stop before venturing out in a storm, as well as on Twitter. Additionally, the LIRR is in constant touch with media outlets, so monitoring television and radio news for the latest travel information is also advised. Assistance is also available from the staff at LIRR's Travel Information Center by calling 511, the New York State Travel Information Line, and say: Long Island Rail Road. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, use your preferred relay service provider or the free 711 relay to LIRR at 511. It's better to know before you go.