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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

MTA LIRR Launches Stark Safety Campaign in Effort to Reduce Accidents at Railroad Crossings

'Wait for the Gate' Video Spots Show Carnage Awaiting Motorists Who Don't

MTA Long Island Rail Road has launched a new public safety campaign in an effort to reduce the number of deaths and injuries that result when motorists and pedestrians ignore downed railroad crossing gates.

"It only takes a fraction of a second to make a very bad decision," intones the narrator over a graphic 15-second public service [video](#) commercial that shows a car being driven around a downed crossing gate only to be pulverized by an oncoming LIRR train. "Your life is worth the wait."

In a [second spot](#) ending with the same crash scene, the voiceover is: "Cars can stop on dime, Trains can't. At 60 miles per hour, it takes up to a mile for an engineer to bring his train to a complete halt. Please wait for the gate."

The locales shown and the passing trains are real. The cars and the collisions you see are computer-generated. However, the final startling image of a wrecked auto and a damaged LIRR train is the real aftermath of a train vs. car incident. The occupants of the car were killed. The engineer was able to vacate his damaged cab just before it was engulfed in fire. That same photograph is the image being used for the campaign.

"It is the story of life and death in 15 seconds," said LIRR President Helena E. Williams. "Sadly, it's a scene that plays out too often. The safety of our customers, our employees and everyone who transverses our right of way is always our top priority. We have addressed the crossing gate problem in public service announcements time and again over the years and felt it was time to raise our voice once more"

Williams said the the Railroad's "Wait for the Gate" campaign will include television, radio and print advertising targeting Long Islanders, especially motorists, on News 12 Long Island, WCBS-880, Metro Traffic & Weather, two local weekly newspaper chains and six outdoor billboard locations near LIRR stations. The Railroad's Department of Customer Service and Public Affairs will also make use of all the available social media platforms, including MTA LIRR website and the LIRR's YouTube, Facebook and Twitter pages.

The Long Island Rail Road has more than 295 grade crossings along some 700 miles of track, most of them in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. So far this year, there have been nine crossing incidents involving cars or pedestrians resulting in six deaths, one a confirmed suicide. In 2012, there were 11 incidents and again six people were killed, though three of those were suicides. That was a marked increase over 2011 when there were six incidents and two fatalities, one a suicide. In 2010, there four incidents, but no deaths