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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Issues Update on Preparations for Tropical Storm Isaias

New York City Transit, Long Island Rail Road, Metro-North and Bridges and Tunnels Prepare for Tropical Storm Force Winds and Heavy Rain

Metro-North Going to Weekend Schedule Tue., Aug. 4

Ban on Empty Tractor-Trailers and Tandem Trucks on MTA Bridges on Tue., Aug. 4

Monitor [new.mta.info](#), [MYmta App](#), [MTA Agencies on Twitter](#) for Latest Service Information

[View Aug. 3 Photos of Sidewalk Grate Protection](#)

[View Aug. 3 Video of Subway Entrance Storm Cover Test, and File Video of Portable Subway Pump](#)

[View File Photos of Portable Subway Pump and Generators](#)

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today issued an update on preparations for Hurricane Isaias. The MTA is taking all necessary precautions to protect its transportation network and deliver safe service. Forecasters are predicting tropical storm force winds and rain to arrive in New York City as early as Tuesday morning.

“This is a serious storm and we’re taking it seriously,” **said MTA Chief Operating Officer Mario Péroquin**. “The MTA is fully engaged in storm preparations across the entire transportation network, and we’ll be getting the benefits of extensive resiliency efforts that have been going on for years since Superstorm Sandy, particularly in low-lying areas of NYC.”

“We are closely monitoring the storm that is expected to bring strong winds and rain to New York City,” **said Interim New York City Transit President Sarah Feinberg**. “There is a comprehensive plan in place for subways and buses and as always, the safety of our employees and customers is our number one priority.”

“Our crews are prepared to respond to any and all weather-related events,” **said Interim Senior Vice President of Subways Frank Jezycki**. “We are monitoring this situation 24/7 and will have equipment in place to make sure trains continue to run and our riders can get where they need to go.”

“We have taken extensive preparations to make sure our depots and buses are ready for this storm, and are monitoring conditions closely throughout our vast service area,” **said Craig Cipriano, President of MTA Bus Company and Senior Vice President for the NYC Transit Department of Buses**. “Safety is our number one priority and we strongly encourage our customers to plan extra travel time and monitor our website, app, and the news in case there are delays or detours.”

“We have been preparing for Isaias for days now and are prepositioning equipment and personnel, inspecting culverts and poor drainage areas, and going to a weekend schedule Tuesday,” **said Metro-North President Catherine Rinaldi**. “Metro-North territory is particularly vulnerable to high winds due to trees and overhead power wires, and customers should plan for the possibility of delays and disruptions when the storm hits.”

“One of the guiding principles of LIRR Forward is to proactively address critical issues that we can control and to be as prepared as we can be for things outside of our control like Mother Nature,” **said LIRR President Phil Eng**. “Our series of initiatives through LIRR Forward including clearing hundreds of miles of trees and vegetation along the tracks, working with PSEG to harden more than 220 transmission and distribution poles along the tracks and proactively replacing or repairing track infrastructure – has put us in a better position to mitigate the impacts of storms such as Isaias and to better respond minimizing any service impacts that may arise. We encourage customers to use our newly updated TrainTime app for the latest real-time service information and travel data.”

“High winds pose a particularly serious concern on bridges, which is why we’re instituting a ban on tandem trailers and empty tractor trailers on our bridges from noon to midnight on Tuesday,” **said MTA Bridges and Tunnels President Daniel DeCrescenzo**. “Additional restrictions may put into place if conditions warrant so we are advising all motorists to look out for announcements as the storm passes through.”

Across New York City Transit, the Long Island Rail Road, Metro-North Railroad and MTA Bridges and Tunnels, crews have assembled 1 million gallons of diesel fuel, 303,000 sandbags, 77,800 gallons of gasoline, 7,348 sheets of plywood, 884 chain saws, 671 portable generators, 422 barriers made of

concrete or plastic, 264 pumps, 218 torches, 198 water suction and discharge hoses, 134 fans, 79 emergency response vehicles, 56 wrecker/tow trucks, 37 excavators, 33 variable message signs, 18 weather data collection stations and three debris-clearing trains.

Customers should take precautions to travel safely and should defer non-essential travel, if possible, during and after heavy rain and winds. Customers may experience significant delays or disruptions and should allow for extra travel time, take extra caution when walking on platforms and stairs, watch for slippery conditions and be mindful for overhead foliage or wires.

All MTA agencies are working closely together, coordinating with local partners to develop precautionary change plans should service be impacted. Details of each agency's storm planning are provided below.

New York City Transit Subways and Buses

The Rail Control Center and Bus Control Center are closely monitoring the storm's progress. Crews are doing the following in preparation:

Subways

- Stage crews to monitor and respond to flood-prone locations.
- Prepare crews on debris trains for supporting clean-up activities.
- Inspect 10 track pump locations.
- Inspect 30 drains at flood prone locations and ensure they are ready to accept water and not create any unsafe conditions.
- Inspect 34 direct sewer connections.
- Cover street vents at six key locations.
- Prepare, fuel and test equipment for debris clearance, if necessary.
- Inspect and stage emergency trucks, pumping equipment, and emergency response equipment.
- Continue to monitor weather reports and assess any implications of storm conditions on high tides or storm surge.

A Local Storm Desk will be activated if conditions warrant. All maintenance departments will be staffed sufficiently. Crews will perform frequent signal switch tests to ensure all signals are functioning as intended and activate weather-related precautions as needed. Non-essential repair, maintenance and construction work is being evaluated for possible suspensions if the weather warrants.

Buses

- All depots will pay special attention for flash flooding. If flooding occurs, depots will respond and move fleets before water levels get too high.
- Flood prone route corridors will also receive extra monitoring.
- Ensure bus windows, hatches and doors are closed.
- All depot parking areas and perimeters will be inspected for unsafe conditions.
- Bus depots will have extra staff to assist in the event a bus is disabled.
- All road trucks will be equipped with chainsaws and any other debris equipment needed.

Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad

There will be around-the-clock staffing for maintenance, operations and customer service departments.

Metro-North will go to a weekend schedule Tuesday, providing provide hourly service all day Tuesday, with service every two hours between Southeast and Wassaic on the Harlem Line and every three hours on the Danbury branch in Connecticut.

LIRR and Metro-North have taken the following precautions:

- Strategic deployment of maintenance personnel including track, signal and power staff.
- Strategic deployment of emergency equipment, such as protect engines, throughout the service territory.
- Have additional public information officers and public address announcers on duty to keep customers informed with up-to-the-minute service information.
- Safety messaging reminding customers to take extra caution when traveling will be made at stations, on trains and platforms, email/text alerts and social media.
- Long Island Rail Road is communicating with PSE&G to ensure proper coverage to protect service disruptions due to downed wires.
- If sustained winds exceed 39 MPH for an extended period of time, service could be reduced or temporarily suspended.

Bridges and Tunnels

All facilities are fully prepared and staffed for an expeditious response to weather-related incidents and will be evaluated throughout the event to ensure efficient deployment of personnel and/or resources.

Electronic weather sensors are functional and all facilities can monitor weather and roadway conditions.

Areas that have proven to be historically prone to flash flooding have been checked and are reported to be free and clear of debris and other obstructions. Crews will monitor these areas and respond to conditions throughout.

Due to the forecasted wind speeds, a ban of tandem trailers and empty tractor trailers will be in effect on MTA bridges from noon to midnight on Tuesday. Motorists should be aware that additional restrictions may be put in place based on conditions.

Authority-wide equipment and supplies--including facility generators, fuel, anemometers--have been checked successfully and are at adequate levels for response and deployment to tropical storm related issues.

All motorists should avoid unnecessary travel during the storm. If you must travel please allow for extra travel time, and be mindful of standing water and high wind conditions.

Construction and Development

Project staff continue to work with operating agencies to coordinate preparations and secure project sites.

Inspectors and project staff continue to tour project sites and ensure drainage is working, generators and pumps have been tested and that elevators under construction are raised.

For real-time service updates and information, customers may use the following options:

- Check new.mta.info or the MYmta app for updates, including modified emergency schedules.
- Follow [@MTA](https://twitter.com/MTA) and the MTA's operating agencies on Twitter.
- Sign up for text message or email alerts at mymtaalerts.com.