

MILEPOSTS

A Newsletter for MTA Metro-North Railroad Customers



September 2014

- [Trucking](#) ▪ [Our Summer](#) ▪ [Walk Bridge](#) ▪ [Ideal Location](#) ▪
- [Train to the Game](#) ▪ [Safety Rule](#) ▪ [Courtesy Corner](#)

A Truck We Don't Mind Having On Our Tracks



If you recently noticed a truck with the logo "Aurora" emblazoned across its doors cruising along Metro-North's tracks, don't worry. It was supposed to be there.

It is actually the main component of Aurora Track Inspection System, which was reviewing every inch of our right-of-way this summer.

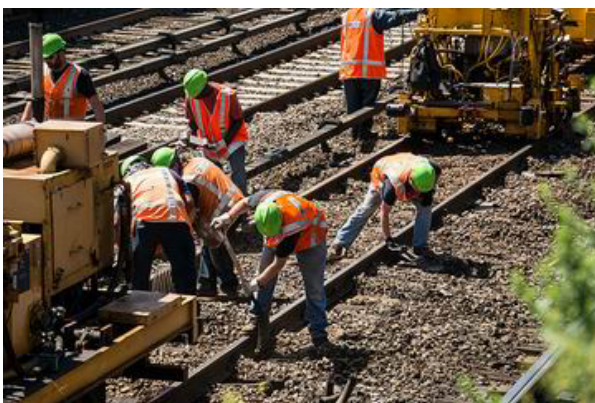
What began in 2003 as a push cart equipped with cameras has developed into a sophisticated

"hi-rail" vehicle—a vehicle that can operate both on rail tracks and a conventional road because it is fitted with both rubber tires and flanged steel wheels for running on rails.

[See more details.](#)

[Back to Top](#)

Where We Spent Our Summer



It may not have been the beach, but it was hot and sunny most days.

Metro-North crews were busy continuing our aggressive program of track improvements to help ensure the safety and reliability of our service! Here's what was accomplished:

On the Hudson Line, as of this writing, we are wrapping up track and drainage improvements on Track 3—the outbound track—between Riverdale and

Greystone. And once they are completed, work will immediately move to the outside (riverside) Track 4.

Also, as you read this, we are finishing up replacing the bridge timbers (rail ties) on the last of the four tracks on the Harlem River Lift Bridge (which is used by all three lines).

In addition, we finished switch replacements—benefitting all three lines—at three critical locations between Harlem-125th Street Station and just south of Yankee Stadium in the Bronx. *(This work was accomplished on weekends, so as not to disrupt your weekday commute.)*

[See more details on the work done for each line.](#)

[Back to Top](#)

Walk Watch



New Haven Line customers have hopefully noticed an improvement in the operation of Walk Bridge, the 118-year old swing bridge spanning the Norwalk River.

To minimize the impact on train service and improve the bridge's reliability, openings at Walk Bridge now require 8 hours advanced notice and are restricted to single openings weekdays from 10 AM to 2 PM, multiple openings on weeknights from 9 PM to 3 AM, as well as weekends, from 9 PM Friday

until 3 AM Monday. The United States Coast Guard issued a Temporary Deviation to the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) to revise the bridge opening hours.

We currently open the bridge manually, meaning that the machinery is activated by a qualified electrician and not by automatic controllers. Crews are stationed around the bridge at critical locations to ensure that all mechanical devices are driven a sufficient length to permit the opening but not so far that equipment comes out of sequence or is damaged.

By selectively upgrading mechanical components involved in the lifting of miter rails, we have progressively been able to decrease the number of items requiring manual intervention during the openings and, as a result, have decreased our average cycle time from 40 minutes to slightly over 20 minutes for each bridge opening. This, of course, will not have to go on forever.

ConnDOT recently released a [report](#) outlining recommendations for short-term fixes to improve Walk's reliability. It was also announced that the Connecticut State Bond Commission has approved \$3 million to fund the improvements recommended in the report.

[See more details.](#)

[Back to Top](#)

An Ideal Location

The stretch of our Park Avenue Tunnel from 59th street to 98th street was recently the site of an emergency evacuation exercise conducted in conjunction with the FDNY Center for Terrorism and Disaster.



Metro-North considers it vital to mount regular emergency preparedness exercises at different points along our system in order to coordinate our response plans and procedures with those of the emergency response agencies in the communities we serve.

The Center and Metro-North identified the Park Avenue Tunnel as "an ideal location" for such a drill because it is where all our lines converge and it is an enclosed space that presents challenges in terms of accessibility.

[See photos and more details.](#)



[Back to Top](#)

Horsehide or Pigskin!



Baseball season isn't over yet, and football season is already upon us!

But it doesn't matter what type of "ball" you prefer, because you can take a Metro-North "Train to the Game." (*Animal lovers don't worry. Most balls are made from synthetic materials today!*)

For football fans, September 7 sees the return of New Haven Line through service to the Meadowlands for all Sunday, 1 PM kick-off for Jets and Giants home games. (Service takes you to Secaucus Junction, where it's an easy transfer to the Meadowlands Rail Line for an express ride to the stadium.)

Hudson, Harlem, and New Haven Line customers can also take Metro-North to Grand Central Terminal, ride the subway to Penn Station-NY, then transfer to a NJ TRANSIT train to the Meadowlands (again connecting at Secaucus Junction).

[See more details.](#)



And of course, our convenient Yankee Stadium game-day service continues until the final home game of the regular season (and Derek Jeter's career), and if the Bronx Bombers make it, the playoffs. (*As Yogi Berra said, "It ain't over till it's over!"*)

[See more details on service.](#)

[Back to Top](#)

Safety Rule of the Issue

Remember that great 1960 surf guitar instrumental "Walk Don't Run" by the Ventures. (*What do you mean you weren't born until 1984? In that case [click here.](#)*)

It was an instrumental, but if it had lyrics, we envision them going something like this:

*Walk, don't run for your train!
You may slip, trip and fall,
and experience pain...*

So remember to always take everything—the valuable, and the not-so-valuable items—with you when you leave the train. And, if it is not a tablet or other device, please dispose of it properly.

It's the courteous thing to do.

[Back to Top](#)

Courtesy Corner



Our Lost & Found has a world renowned reputation and record rate for returning items left on our trains to their proper owners.

Cell phones, tablets, luggage... if you've forgotten it, chances are they've found it and gotten it back to you.

But imagine if they started doing that with your old coffee cups, used tissues, food containers, newspapers... now that would be disgusting. (*Sir, we have your ham sandwich, and it is only partially eaten! We also found your empty soda can...*)

So after you've finished enjoying that sandwich, or sipping that latte, remember to dispose of any containers or wrappers in the proper receptacle. Please don't throw the trash on the tracks or on the platform.

And it's the courteous thing to do!

[Back to Top](#)

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