

MTA Rail
Safety
Outreach
Program
PSA Sends
Message:

Tracks Mean Trains

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Scene from the PSA shows a mother and her child who decide to beat the train by crossing the tracks, but don't make it in time.

(Jan. 30, 2003) The MTA Rail Safety Outreach Program teamed up with an award-winning producer and renowned director the weekend of Jan.10, to create public service announcements with a strong rail safety message.

The filming took place at the Mission Street station in South Pasadena. There were approximately 80 participants, including crewmembers and extras.

The PSAs are aimed at patrons who take the train and residents who live near train tracks. They will be an important element in MTA's outreach to communities and especially to schools along the Metro Gold Line and Metro Blue Line.

"Because the two lines run along city streets through intersections, there is a higher chance of interaction between the trains and pedestrians and automobiles," said Senior Communications Officer Yoon Ham. "Since our main focus is children, we plan to make this PSA appealing to them."

Jana Sue Memel from Chanticleer Films produced the PSA. She has in recent years been nominated for 11 Academy Awards and has brought home three Oscars for her short films. Addison Wright, who has directed several major films and music videos, also directed the PSA.

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PSA PREVIEW



In this scene, a little boy on his bicycle tries to beat the train, but soon realizes that the train is much faster.



In one of the skits, a family decides to cross the tracks to catch the train, but their trip ends in tragedy when one family member gets caught between the tracks. Actors from left, T.C. Chau, Suwannee Chokemesil, Jesse Manapat and Hunter Peoples.

Operation Lifesaver Tips:

Do not walk, run, cycle or operate all-terrain vehicles on railroad tracks, rights-of-way or through tunnels.

Real-life occurrences

The scenes in the film are depictions of real-life occurrences.

The skits illustrate the dangers of pedestrians running on train ramps, sitting on the edge of the ramp, crawling between trains, and the danger of drivers who attempt to race the trains. Props, such as a wrecked vehicle, were used to represent the severity of the consequences.

Cross tracks only at designated pedestrian or roadway crossings. Observe and obey all warning signs and signals.

Do not attempt to hop aboard rail equipment at any time.

Remember: Rails and recreation do not mix!

The filming allowed MTA employees, family members and outside volunteers the opportunity to be cast as extras. They included Leanne Ramirez, 7, daughter of RRC employee Albert Ramirez, who said, "I'm really excited because I'm going to be in a commercial."

Ramirez and her brother Edward, 9, engaged in a scene where they were filmed running on the platform to catch a train.

Those who contributed their time spent countless hours retaking scenes and waiting for the film crew to set up.

Transportation Planning Managers David Sikes and Susan Phifer, along with her daughter, Emma Simon, and a friend were among those who spent all day on the set.

"We've been here since 7 a.m.," said Phifer, "but it's fun to watch it all come together."

'A lot of hurry up and wait'

Sikes described the morning as, "a lot of hurry up and wait, but it's been enjoyable to watch it all. This is a nice way for me to participate in the safety issue for the Metro Gold Line."

Sikes and Phifer both played passengers in the background in a skit titled "Dangling". In the skit, two teenagers sit on the platform with their legs draping over the edge while a train approaches. The implication is that one of the teenagers doesn't get up in time when the train arrives.

"I hope it comes out to be a good safety message for the MTA and the community that the line serves," said Phifer.

The PSA will be shown in movie theaters, on television and possibly broadcast on radio once editing is completed in mid-April or May.

It also will be featured in MTA's multi-media mobile theatre. The theater, which seats roughly 16 people, will show realistic three-dimensional presentations.

"Our main message that we want to get across to people is that "Tracks means Trains," said Ham.