Innovative Rail Safety Outreach for a New Rail Transit Service in Austin, Texas

Alissa Schram
Community Involvement Specialist
Rail Safety Liaison
Capital Metro
Capital MetroRail

- Late 2008 startup
- 32 miles on existing freight tracks from Leander to downtown
- One of the area’s busiest traffic corridors
- 9 stations planned
- Sleek and quieter than typical commuter trains
Physical Safety

- Testing
- Fencing
- Enforcement
- Quad Gates
- Additional Signage at each intersection
Operation Lifesaver

- Commuter Rail Presentation
- 30,000 Students
- 41 Schools within one mile
- Senior Centers
- Libraries
- Child Care Facilities
Innovative Approach: Who’s Involved

GROW (Grassroots Rail Outreach Working) Group
A grassroots support team of existing organizations and campaigns:

- AAA
- Alliance for Public Transportation
- Amtrak
- Austin American Statesman
- Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce
- Austin Children’s Museum
- Austin Independent School District
- Austin Fire Department
- Austin Police Department
- Austin Public Library
- Austin School of Film
- Babies’ R’ Us
- Border Media Partners
- Boy Scouts of America
- Boys and Girls Clubs of the Capital Area
- Dell Children’s Hospital
- City of Austin Child Safety Program
- City of Leander Community Action Network
- ECHO (End Chronic Homelessness Organizing Committee)
- Federal Railroad Administration
- Girl Scouts of America
- Housing Authority of the City of Austin
- KLRU (PBS)
- Light Rail Now! .org
- Media outlets
- Milkshake Media
- Mobiliti
- Operation Lifesaver
- Partners in Education
- Safe Kids Austin
- Tate Austin Hahn
- Texas Bicycle Coalition
- Travis County Attorney’s Office
- Travis County EMS
- Travis County Sheriff’s Office
- TxDOT
- Veolia
- Univision
- Youth InterACTIVE
Endorsements

- Will Wynn, Mayor of Austin
- Austin Police Chief Art Acevedo
- Austin EMS Director Ernie Rodriguez
- Former Austin Fire Chief JJ Adame
- Sally Tingle, Texas Operation Lifesaver, Director
Completed Concepts

- Girl Scouts Rail Safety Patch Program
- Boy Scouts Rail Safety Patch Program
- PSA Competition hosted by Austin School of Film
- Flyers in English/Spanish, English/Vietnamese, and English/Mandarin
- Book covers for all Elementary and Middle/High school students within one mile of the tracks
- Rail Safety PSA featuring Police and Fire Chiefs (English and Spanish)
- Blockwalking to homes within a ¼ mile of the tracks
- Posting yard signs at every rail-grade intersection
- Rail Safety website: www.stayoffthetracks.com
- Bus Radio Rail Safety PSAs on every Yellow Bus (AISD bus) in Austin
- Visual representation at the Travis County Sheriff’s Shattered Dreams event
- Endorsements from the Mayor, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and EMS Director
- Facebook Site
- MySpace Site
- Magnets
Concepts in Development

- Webinars
- Bus Wrap
- Additional PSAs
- Spanish Audience PSA
- Billboards
- Homeless community outreach
- Driver education via AAA
- Cyclist education via newsletters, Bicycle rodeos, listservs
- Rail Safety component of Children’s museum transit exhibit
- Employee message for major employers
- Girl Scouts Event at train station
- Boy Scouts Test Passengers
Tracks Are for Trains! Not for Playing Games!
¡El riel es para el tren! ¡No para jugar!

Just a reminder to parents and caregivers that when school is out, DON’T let your kids play anywhere near railroad tracks.

Este anuncio es para recordarles a los padres y guardianes que al final de este año escolar en adelante, NO permita que los niños jueguen cerca de las vías de tren.

FALL 2007: Capital MetroRail begins testing new, quiet, fast-moving passenger trains. For more information visit All Systems Go Long Range Plan at http://allsystemsgo.org

Capital MetroRail is coming to a train track near you!

Remember the ACMOR rules!

A Always look both ways.
C Cross only at crosswalks.
O Obey all signs and signals.
R Railroad tracks are for trains.
E Never try to outrun a train.

¡Recuerda las reglas de la NUEZ!

N Nunca cruces en medio a ambos lados.
U Usa solo los cruces peatonales.
E Evita tragedias, obedecer las señales.
Z Zonas de vía son solo para el tren.

Capital MetroRail

¡El Capital MetroRail: Llegar pronto a un riel de tren cerca de ti!

Earl P. Nutt says,
“Use your brains! Stay away from trains!”

Earl P. Nutt dice,
“¡Usa tu cerebro, aléjate de los trenes!”

Capital MetroRail
• Quieter than a bus
• Faster than a car
• Coming to Austin in 2008

• Más silencioso que un autobús
• Más rápido que un carro
• Llega a Austin el 2008

Produced in partnership with
VEOLIA TRANSPORTATION
www.capitalmetro.org

Be smart. Be safe. — capmetro.org
Se inteligente. Sé seguro.
Did you know?
- It can take up to two football fields (or 600 feet) for a commuter train to stop.
- MetroRail can travel up to 75 m.p.h.
- MetroRail trains will take you to great locations.
- MetroRail trains have wireless Internet.
- You can bring your bike on MetroRail.

¿Sabias Que?
- Un tren de pasajeros necesita el espacio de dos campos de fútbol americanos para parar.
- El MetroRail viaja a 75 millas por hora.
- El MetroRail a llevado a lugares maravillosos.
- El MetroRail vendrá Internet inalámbrico.
- Puedes llevar tu bicicleta en el MetroRail.

Capital MetroRail
- Quieter than a bus
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Be Smart. Be Safe.
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Capitol Metro, Operation Lifesaver, Amtrak and Girl Scouts would like to remind you to be safe around trains.
Always use caution and remember: LOOK, LISTEN and LIVE when crossing railroad tracks.

Taking trains can be a fun way to get from here to there, and we want to make sure you have the tools to do it safe and smart.

Capital Metro, Operación Salvavidas, Amtrak y Girl Scouts les quiere recordar que siempre deben ser seguros al cruzar los trenes.

Siempre utilice precaución y recuerde: MIRE, ESCÚCHAE y VIVE cuando cruce las vías del tren.

[Tomar el tren es una manera divertida para ir y venir, pero queremos asegurarnos de que siempre los crucemos adecuados para hacerlo de manera segura y inteligente].

Be on the lookout for the Rail Safety Patch.
Esté alerta por el parche de Seguridad al Riel.
Moving Forward

On November 17, 2007, the Texas Transit Association Board of Directors met for a strategic planning session to establish the direction of our association for the coming year. The meeting was generally hosted by Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) at the Epona House in Lewisville.

President John Hendrickson shared his thoughts regarding TTA’s role in supporting Texas transit, which includes nine regional transportation authorities. He highlighted the benefits of supporting mathematics education and initiatives to train students for careers. The overall plan is a collaborative effort to develop a more effective transportation system in the future.

The meeting was followed by a General Membership meeting.

Taking the Taxi

Since 2004, people have been taking the taxi to shop in the Woodlands—a water taxi.

The Brazos Transit District regularly runs the large white boats through the waterway to get shoppers and visitors to different shopping and restaurant destinations along the waterway. Kayaks, canoes, and other non-motorized boats are rare now, but the water taxis have become an integral part of the retail scene. An extension project is underway which will add another section to the system.

The project will add another section to the waterway's existing water taxi service, providing easier access to more locations along the waterway.

Did You Know?

- In 2006, transit systems in Texas carried more than 247 million riders.
- Houston Metro carried more passengers than any other metro system—more than 102 million.
- Almost 2 million miles.
- El Metro in Laredo carried more passengers per mile than any other urban system.

These statistics and more are found in the new 2006 Texas Transit Statistics report published by the TxDOT Public Transportation Division.

The new 2006-2005 Texas Transit Statistics report is also available.

Both reports may be reviewed online at www.txdot.gov/publications/public_transportation.htm

The Girl Scouts are famous for selling cookies

Not Just Selling Cookies Anymore

Thanks to Capital Metro, they may also become famous for helping to promote rail safety.

The Innovative Safety Outreach group at Capital Metro has teamed up with Girl Scouts of Central Texas and the Capitol Area Boy Scout Council, in creating a brand new merit badge program to promote rail safety. Their goal is to educate the community about rail safety through partnerships and existing organizations, such as area scouting programs.

It is a youth-based rail safety program which will include the distribution of bi-lingual flyers, television PSAs and MySpace networking, while also promoting alternate forms of transportation within the 45-county area of the Girl Scouts of Central Texas.

Rail Safety Patch kits will soon be available at the four Girl Scout Program Centers in Austin, Waco, Brownwood and San Angelo to assist troops in earning their badges.

The program will be unveiled in the Spring 2008 edition of the Girl Scouts’ publication, Possibilities, which is circulated to 20,000 girls as well as 12,000 adult volunteers.
Join our CREATIVE COUNCIL!

VOLUNTEER HERE!

Are you local Maker?
Want to have a say in Capital Metro’s upcoming outreach efforts?

Then join our creative council!

Capital Metro is taking an innovative, grassroots approach to spreading a RAIL SAFETY message through Central Texas.

Over the next 12 months, we are going to be hosting a series of community competitions to promote RAIL SAFETY.

We will be implementing your creative ideas and concepts to get the word out and promote RAIL SAFETY to kids and communities in Central Texas.

We want you to volunteer your creative time and talent to help us out! So sign up to see your ideas put into action!
Just One Restriction

GOSH I WISH I STAYED OFF THAT RAILROAD!

Female
28 years old
AUSTIN, Texas
United States
Last Login:
1/16/2008

View My: Pics | Videos

Send Message | Forward
Add to Friends | Add to Fave
Instant Message | Block
Add to Group | Block User

Just One Restriction's Latest Blog Entry

We Want Your Creative Ideas! (view more)

Innovative Rail Safety in Austin American Statesman (view more)

[View All Blog Entries]

About me:

Times are changing and Austin is getting a commuter rail, faster freight trains, and a bunch of cool destinations at the stations (along with lots of other rail stuff around the city)... We don't want anyone to lose a limb (or worse), so we've got to get the word out about staying off the train tracks.

Who I'd like to meet:

We are YOUR interactive safety campaign here in Travis County, and are looking for you to get involved. Doesn't matter if you walk, bike, ride a car, or take the bus, people have gotta be in the know on how to stay safe around the tracks. Have an idea about how to get people to stay off the tracks? Contests, interactive media, PSA, video games, billboards, telenovelas... message us and let us know what it is!

Just One Restriction has 7 friends.

Tom | Jenn Sum | Community Transit | Images

MySpace URL:

http://www.myspace.com/innovativesafetyoutreach

Just One Restriction's Interests

General
This new campaign, the Innovative Safety Outreach, uses media, technology, community ideas, and your input to design a way tell people to stay off the tracks. Our mission is to get Austin's creativity (YOU) to help us catapult the message to be safe around trains.

Music
We are Austin, and we've got the coolest creative community in the country! So
TRACKS ARE FOR TRAINS!
NOT FOR PLAYING GAMES!

 informações do texto: "奧斯汀捷運局提醒父母親和孩童看護者: 全勿讓孩子們近鐵路軌道附近嬉戲玩耍, 鐵路軌道是讓火車行走用的!"

ĐƯỜNG SẮT ĐÃNH CHO XE LỪA!
không phải để chơi đùa!
CENTRAL TEXAS TRANSPORTATION

With commuter rail only a year away, Leander and Austin start educating residents about safety

Officials are now working on rail safety tips for students, public service announcements

By Melissa Mixon
AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Thursday, November 29, 2007

The 32-mile commuter rail line from downtown Austin to Leander won't be running until next fall, but there's already some action sparking around the tracks.

Two of the six Swiss train cars, which will eventually shuttle an estimated 1,700 to 2,000 commuters a day, have arrived in North Austin, and test runs could start by the end of this month, Capital Metro officials said.

In the meantime, officials in Travis and Williamson counties are putting together safety tips and programs to encourage people to avoid walking or playing on the tracks. There are even plans for Girl and Boy Scout merit badges for rail safety.

"People have gotten used to crossing these tracks for the past generations, so the main message is to stay off the tracks," said Alissa Schramm, a community involvement specialist for Capital Metro.

The tracks were originally used to ship granite to build the state Capitol in the 1880s and have since been used by freight and cargo trains, Schramm said.
Los Reiles son para el Tren.
No para Jugar.

Art Arcevedo
JEFE DE POLICÍA
DE AUSTIN

J.J. Adame
JEFE DE BOMBEROS
DE AUSTIN

www.StayOffTheTracks.com
Tracks are for trains.

Not for playing games.

Art Arcevedo
AUSTIN POLICE CHIEF

J.J. Adame
AUSTIN FIRE CHIEF

www.StayOffTheTracks.com
Tracks are for trains. Not for playing games.

SILENCE: COMMUTER TRAINS ARE MUCH QUIETER THAN FREIGHT TRAINS.

www.stayoffthetracks.com
Los Rieles son para el Tren.
No para Jugar.

¡Recuerda las reglas de la NUEZ!

N Nunca cruces sin mirar a ambos lados
U Usa solo las vías de circulación
E Evita ojópolis, obedeces las señales
Z Zonas de peligro solo para el tren

¿Para, mira, y escucha?

PARA
MIRA
ESCÚCHA
CAMINA

Éarl P. Nutt dice, ¡Usa tu cerebro, aléjate de los trenes!

NUNCA camines, juegues, patines, o uses tu bici en el entorno de los rieles del tren. ¡Mantén lejos de los rieles!

NUNCA camines dentro de áreas de construcción.

¿Seguro y ayuda a otros a mantenerse seguros alrededor de los rieles del tren?

Éarl P. Nutt en “Camina como una ardilla”

Si tiene niños:

Nunca juegue con los trenes, nunca juegue en la línea de los trenes.

Prepárate en tiempo y para evitar y/o saber fost de riesgo del tren.

Recuerda, los trenes no paran por nadie, siempre camina usando las vías de circulación.

Es importante que se cumplan las reglas para que nunca entren en el esquema de la línea.

Sólo látigos a sí mismo cuando no se darte en auto y en el camino.

Además de las vías, no te pierdas nada de seguridad.

Cuando andes en carro:

Siempre revisa cuando no se muevas hacia los rieles del tren — es que pueden estar en movimiento.

Siempre lleva en el bolsillo el número de teléfono de Emergencias. En caso de que te toque usar en la seguridad de la línea de trenes.

No te atrevas a hacer actos peligrosos en el camino de los trenes, manténse en el camino de la seguridad del camino de los trenes.

Cuando andes caminando:

Siempre que, reve y escucha para que en la línea no te encuentres con cosas que no sean de tu camino.

No se puede con obstrucciones o que se cruzen en su camino para que no se encuentren con cosas que no sean de tu camino.

Los rieles actúan peligrosamente y siempre deben estar en su camino proporcionalmente y no cruzar el camino con seguridad en medio de la línea de la seguridad.

Cuando sea en el camino de los trenes, debes estar en el camino del tren y no pases por la línea de la seguridad.

No se puede hacer actos peligrosos en el camino de los trenes, manténse en el camino de la seguridad del camino de los trenes.

Cuando sea en el camino de los trenes, debes estar en el camino del tren y no pases por la línea de la seguridad.

Cerca de las vías, TO más regulaciones y normas de la línea de seguridad de la línea de los trenes.
TRAIN SAFETY MESSAGES

Austin Specific:

- Hey kids in Austin, Capital MetroRail will soon be testing its new trains on a track near you. These trains are quieter and faster than freight trains, so be careful when crossing railroad tracks. And remember: Tracks are for trains, not for playing games!

Generic Rail Safety:

- Remember, when walking before or after school, only cross the railroad tracks at marked crossings and NEVER use the railroad tracks as a shortcut.
- Play far away from train tracks. Some trains are so fast and quiet, you may not hear or know they are coming.
- Tracks are for trains! Not for playing games!
- Did you know that trains don’t have steering wheels? They have to follow the tracks they are on, so it’s up to us to stay out of the way.
- Walking, playing, or sitting on train tracks is dangerous and against the law!
- Always expect a train.
- Always LOOK both ways before crossing railroad tracks. A train could be coming from either direction.
- When waiting for a train to pass, always stand far away from the tracks.
- Always LISTEN for the sounds of a train.
- If we LOOK, LISTEN, and WAIT for a train, then we will LIVE!
- Stay off railroad tracks! Trespassing is dangerous and illegal, so Stay Off, Stay Away, and Stay Alive!

WEBSITES

www.oli.org  Operation Lifesaver
Trains are moving faster and quieter: Stay off the tracks!

Los trenes se mueven con más rapidez y silencio: ¡Mantente lejos de los rieles!

Please call 385-0190 with questions.
YOUNG CAMERA BUFFS CAN FOCUS ON RAIL SAFETY IN FILM CONTEST

Aspiring young film makers with a penchant for promoting railroad safety might be about to get their big break.

The Austin School of Film is teaming up with the Grassroots Rail Outreach Working Group, which has been working with Capital Metro and the Federal Railroad Association, to sponsor a public service announcement contest for children ages 7 to 18.

Mayor Will Wynn and Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services Director Ernie Rodriguez will kick off the contest today with an announcement at City Hall. Participants will need to go to the Austin School of Film at 11 a.m. on May 16 to learn about the contest rules. Entries must be submitted by 3 p.m. May 24.

The winning 30- to 60-second announcement will be screened at a local film festival. No filming on or around tracks, of course.

For more information, see www.austinfilmschool.org and www.stayoffthetracks.com.

Compiled from staff and wire reports
RAIL SAFETY
FILM CONTEST FOR YOUTH

KICKOFF DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 9 @ 11AM
DUE DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 24 @ 3PM

REGISTRATION
Will be held on the kickoff date at the Austin School of Film. Legal guardian(s) or parent(s) must be present to sign the applications.

ABOUT THE COMPETITION
This is a two-week competition, where teams of up to 4 will be challenged to create a fun and effective public service announcement (PSA) that promotes rail safety. Ages 7-18 are welcomed to be a part of this event.

SIGN UP EARLY
The process will be smoother if you sign up early. Contact Maria Chavez at maria@austinfilmschool.org or by phone at 512.236.8877 and let her know your name and contact information. This will secure your spot.

OFFICIAL RULES
They will be sent by e-mail to those students who sign up early by e-mail on May 8th. The rules will be discussed at the kickoff date.

PRIZES!
Austin School of Film and GROW will award up to a $500 film scholarship, screenings at local media outlets, one month free rail pass, certificate of recognition from Mayor Will Wynn to the winners with the most creative and effective PSAs that drive home life saving messages, keeping kids safe and off the tracks.

Contact Maria at maria@austinfilmschool.org for more information.
Tracks are for Trains!
Not for Playing Games!

¡El Riel es para el Tren!
¡No para Jugar!

Always look both ways before crossing

Cross only at crosswalks

Obey all signs and signals

Railroad tracks are for trains only!

Never try to out run a train!

Remember the ACORN rules!

¡Recuerda las reglas NUEZ!

www.stayoffthetracks.com
**Rail Safety Patch Program**

**Kick off Event**

**Date:** Saturday, October 11

**Time:** 1pm-4pm

**Place:** Lakeline Station

**Patch:** Rail Safety

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**Programa del Parche de Seguridad en el Riel**

**Inicio del Evento**

**Fecha:** Sabado 11 de octubre

**Hora:** 1pm-4pm

**Lugar:** Lakeline Station

**Parche:** Seguridad en el Riel

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[www.stayoffthetracks.com](http://www.stayoffthetracks.com)
June 27, 2007

Dear Rail Outreach Working Group,

Thank you to each of you for participating in Capital Metro’s Safety Outreach Initiative. Your involvement in the Rail Outreach Working Group demonstrates your commitment to the very important issue of our community’s safety.

The impending start of Capital Metro’s commuter rail service to our community represents an exciting change for our region. However, it will take a collective effort to ensure our citizens are able to adjust to this new transportation infrastructure safely.

Austin is nationally recognized as the safest city for child pedestrians, and with your help, it will remain that way. I appreciate that you have taken the time to ensure that the rail safety message is successful and I stand ready to support your continued work in this endeavor.

Regards,

Will Wynn
Mayor
November 14, 2007

To the Grassroots Rail Outreach Working Group volunteers,

I would like to personally thank you for your commitment to our community’s safety. Your participation on a volunteer group such as GROW is commendable and vital as Capital Metro opens new modes of transportation for this community.

Coming from a transportation city, I understand the safety concerns that accompany mass transit systems. Thanks to your dedication to keeping Central Texas safe, I feel sure that all necessary steps will be taken to inform the community and prevent unintentional incidents.

I look forward to learning what the GROW Group develops, and am ready to support you in every way the Austin Police Department can.

Best Regards,

[Signature]

ART ACEVEDO
Chief of Police

AA:rle
Thanks!

Alissa Schram
Alissa.schram@capmetro.org
512-369-7759