

# Health & Safety

March 2014

# CAUTION CAUTION



## Newsletter

### Station Agent Gets Frostbite In Change Booth

By Vanessa Jones, Safety & Health Rep

We are all aware that we should dress for the weather, but who would think to dress for work (in an enclosed area) as though you were going mountain climbing in Alaska? As incredible as it sounds, a Station Agent working in an unheated booth at the Gun Hill Station in the Bronx actually suffered frostbite on one of those zero-degree days earlier this winter.

Mind you, the TA instructs Station Agents to wear nothing more than a sweater on duty in a change booth.

#### Here's what happened!

Upon entering the Gun Hill Road (Dyre Ave. Line) station one freezing cold morning, the Agent noticed that the booth was cold, and the heater could not be adjusted. She waited to see if the booth would get warmer. After one hour she realized it felt colder and her feet were getting cold. She called the field office to notify supervision of the issue. She explained the situation and patiently waited for the supervisor to find a portable heater.

I made a random call to the location. The agent told me she was feeling numbness and tingling in her feet. Gun Hill is a very active location. Doors are constantly opening and closing allowing a draft directly into the booth.

The S/A was advised her to hit the EBCS and notify RCC of the situation and request medical. She hit the EBCS and told the Supervisor that she could no longer



feel her feet because it had gotten so cold in the booth and expressed the need to vacate the booth. RCC told her it was an issue for the F/O, because, they say, she did not directly say she needed medical attention.

I called the F/O to get a status report, then called back to the booth and advised her again to hit the EBCS and specifically say she needed medical attention, and that she had no alternative heated location to go to in the station.

When the Agent finally left the booth and got to Medical, the doctor diagnosed the problem as "frostbite," (see report below).

We did a joint safety inspection of this station in October 2013 and found that

newly mounted heaters in the bathroom and facility room were not ready for use. The booth heater appeared to be working then. The heaters were fixed immediately after this incident.

As a union, we explore ways to be most proactive in cases like this. It is ultimately the contractual responsibility of management to follow the safety guidelines and provide a safe and healthy work environment. Of course, we all should feel obligated to do our part to make sure we return home the same way we come in to work.

Let us keep in mind that workers may request (from your immediate supervisor) a Safety Dispute Resolution Form in any situation you may deem harmful to your health.

## FROSTBITE

According to the National Health Institute, frostbite is damage to the skin and underlying tissues caused by extreme cold. It occurs when the skin and body tissues are exposed to cold temperature for a prolonged period of time. Frostbite may affect any part of the body. The hands, feet, nose, and ears are the most vulnerable. OSHA does not have a specific standard that covers working

in cold environments. Under OSHA, employers have a duty to protect workers from recognized hazards, including cold stress hazards. In cold, most of the body's energy is used to keep the internal core warm. Over time, the body will begin to shift blood flow from the extremities to the core. This shift allows the exposed skin and the extremities to cool rapidly and increases the risk of frostbite.

DOCTOR'S CERTIFICATION	
I hereby certify that _____ was treated by me on the date/s and for illness noted	
Employee's Name	
Dates of treatment: Home _____ Office _____ Hospital 1/26/14	
DIAGNOSIS/OBJECTIVE FINDINGS Frostbite	
TREATMENT/PROGNOSIS AND EXPECTED DATE OF RETURN	Pt to remain off feet x 1 week.
	FLU E PND . Return to work 2/3/14
I further certify that this illness so incapacitated this employee that he/she was incapable of performing his/her duties	
the period from: 1/26/14 to 2/2/14, and that the information in this section, which is used for payment purposes, is truthful.	
Physician Stamp	Date 1/26/14
SHOSHANA WEINER, FNP Lic. # F333233 DEA # MW 0685024	Physician's Signature/Tax ID No. <i>Shoshana Weiner</i>

## Local 100 Prepares for the Next 'Big One' With New Taskforce

The tri-state area had never seen anything like Sandy. Hundreds of Local 100 families were impacted by the storm, and remain vulnerable for the next such disaster.

New York State recently launched a \$5 million citizen training program officials believe will help better prepare residents during such emergencies.

In hopes of capitalizing on the resources being provided by the State and to help prepare members for the next Sandy, Local 100 President John Samuelsen established a "Disaster Preparedness Task Force." Long term, the union is developing disaster preparedness training sessions are being developed. Short term, the union is piggy-backing off the excellent State program, which held its first training program on Feb. 1, 2012 in Farmingdale, Long Island and on Staten Island.

Several hundred people attended, including Local 100 Task Force members Richie Rivera (Staten Island) and Norman Michaels (Long Island).

Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who unveiled the program during a speech with Vice President Joe Biden by his side in January, personally addressed both sessions, demonstrating his determination to make the program a success.

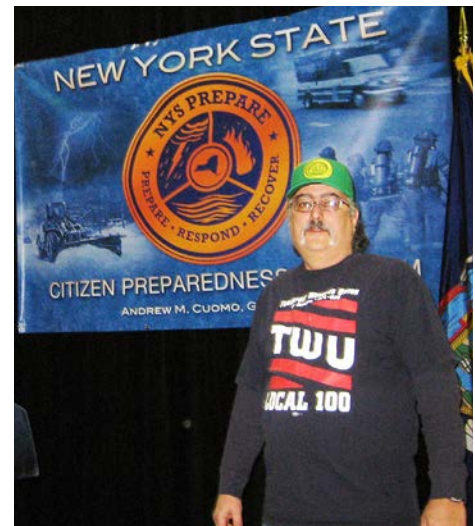
"We want our state's citizens to be the most prepared in the nation for natural disasters as we continue to re-imagine New York for a new reality," Cuomo said.

The state hopes to train 100,000 people to "be their own first responder in their communities," Cuomo added.

Officials also launched a website, [prepare.ny.gov](http://prepare.ny.gov), where residents can sign up for training.

Saturday's participants also received a free starter kit, which includes a first aid kit, water, gloves, a flashlight, emergency blanket, and other items.

Local 100's volunteers, Rivera and Michaels, have a few things in common. Both are hard working transit workers with years of service under their belts. Both are proud union



Above left, Richie Rivera at Staten Island session; above right, Norman Michaels at Long Island event.

members. Both suffered deeply at the hands of Hurricane Sandy; and, neither are fully back whole as yet. Rivera said that both he and Michaels, want to make the new Local 100 Task Force work so that in the event of another natural disaster; transit workers, their families and communities will be better prepared.

Michaels, a TWU-trained shop steward, said in regard to the session he attended on Long Island: "Preparation for a pending storm or an unexpected emergency is a family matter. All members of your family need to be involved in the preparation of an emergency plan. Contact people or places must be discussed, out of state friends or family should be included in your family's plan as a point of contact outside of the disaster area. We must all have a supply closet with food, water and other essentials necessary to sustain our families for at least 7 to 10 days.

Both noted from painful experience during Sandy that help from FEMA, OEM, the electric and gas companies, county, state and town governments may be days or in some cases weeks away.



Rivera said: "We as transit workers, regardless of title may not be at home when disaster strikes. Cell phones and land lines may not be functioning, but we will be on the job, doing what we do, with no way to get home or communicating with our family. Therefore it is necessary for each one of us to prepare in advance for any emergency."

**"Also, Be sure you have the phone numbers of your local Fire, Police, Sanitation and Community Boards," concluded Rivera. "You will need each them before and after a disaster. Act like a Community Shop Steward."**





### Emergency Supplies Checklist for Survival Kit

**Build a Kit:** Every member of your family should have an individualized Emergency Survival Kit. The emergency survival kit should be robust and contain enough food, water, medications and other consumables to last three days. The following items should be included in your emergency supplies kit:

- Backpack to be used for evacuation
- 4" x 4" Gauze
- 5" x 9" Trauma Gauze
- Ace Bandage
- Roll of Medical Tape
- Antiseptic Wipes
- Bottle of Saline
- Medical Gloves
- Assorted Band-aids
- Whistle
- Work Gloves
- Eye Goggles
- Emergency Blanket
- Extra Batteries
- Dust Mask
- Sanitation Wipes
- Manual Can Opener
- Flashlight - including batteries
- Multi-Tool with Pliers
- Reflective Vest
- Sleeping Bag

**Join TWU Local 100's  
Disaster Preparedness  
Task Force**  
Call: 212-873-6000 ext. 2064

Please **add to your kit every week** and begin to build a kit for each member of your family. Be sure to incorporate every family members individual needs and address them in their personalized kit. Be sure to add an entertainment item in your kit like a deck of cards or a paperback book. Most importantly, insure that you rotate your sustainment items on annual basis

### Part 1. Sustainment

- 7-10 Day Supply of Non-perishable Food
- Water Purification Tablets
- 7-10 Day Supply of Water (one gallon water per person, per day)
- Collapsible Water Container
- Ready to Eat Canned Foods
- Candy
- Eating Utensils
- Energy Bars

### Part 2. Hygiene

- Toothpaste & Toothbrush
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Hand Sanitizer
- Garbage Bags
- Resealable Plastic Bags (Quart Size)
- Medication (10 Day Supply)
- Toilet Paper
- Towels
- Travel Soap, Shampoo, Deodorant
- Change of Clothing

### Part 3. Tools

- LED Lantern w/batteries
- Glow Sticks
- Duct Tape
- Local Maps
- Waterproof Matches
- Paper and Pencil
- Permanent Marker
- Cell Phone Charger
- Document Holder

## Joint Track Safety Task Force Eyes New Rules, Pilot Programs

By Jack Blazejewicz, Track Division

The Joint Track Safety Task Force has been overseeing the implementation of two pilot programs as well as reviewing several rules in order to increase worker safety.

The first is for pre-service inspection of trains and the second is a new procedure for track inspectors walking through switch areas. The pilot that was implemented at 207th St. Yard for Train Operators and Car Inspectors in regards to the pre service inspection of trains has been successful and will be rolled out system wide in the near future once the flags are procured.

The second pilot program involves track inspections while walking through switch areas. Local 100 discovered that track inspectors were not being sufficiently protected while performing walking inspections in switch areas. Their flagger would be ahead on the track being inspected looking out for oncoming train traffic but there was nobody looking out for traffic on the adjacent track that could diverge onto the switch area the track inspector was inspecting. So, a pilot program was implemented where the track inspector calls the rail control center for permission prior to walking through switch areas. Before granting permission, the rail control center removes the line ups for oncoming trains and allows the track inspector to safely inspect the switch area without worries of diverging traffic. This pilot is still in the earlier stages and is being evaluated further as it is slowly rolled out.

In addition to the pilot programs, the Track Safety Task Force has been reviewing several NYCT rules. Some of these rules required changes to be made that would either increase safety or clarify existing rules to further safety. A long overdue new NYCT rulebook is in the final stages of review and will hopefully be out in the near future.

### Safety & Health Department Officers

**Tom Carrano**  
Director, Subways  
**Frank Austin**  
Director, Buses  
**Dr. Frank Goldsmith**  
Director, Occupational Health

### TWU Local 100 Officers

**John Samuelson**  
President  
**Earl Phillips**     **Latonya Crisp-Sauray**  
Secretary Treasurer     Recording Secretary  
**Angel Giboyeaux**  
Administrative Vice President

**Your Safety Reps in the Field: Keith Cummings, Harold Boro, Tommy McNally, Tom McGlynn,  
Dennis Jones, Steve St. Hill, Vanessa Jones, Lawrence Rafolovich**  
TWU Hotline: 1-888-302-3727; Workers' Comp: 212-873-6000 Ext. 2133

# TWU Local 100 Takes a Stand On Safety At Jamaica

A strong team effort by Jamaica Chair Mike Walsh, Safety and Health Rep Steven St. Hill, and Director of Subway Safety Tom Carrano resulted in an important safety win at Jamaica Barn.

On Oct. 30, 2013 Jamaica Chair Walsh notified management that the 600vdc main trolley leads (AKA Bugs) were being hung improperly by the collar hooks. They were draped off of the circuit breaker box and dangling with the 600vdc tips pointing down, posing a potentially deadly hazard to anyone working in the area.

When hung properly, the live 600vdc tips are pointed up toward the ceiling and away from the workers. Management refused to consider Walsh's complaint.

Walsh contacted the TWU Safety Department. Safety rep St. Hill was the first to arrive. He was shocked by management's lack of cooperation and concern on an important safety issue. "I could not believe the lack of response from management on a safety issue involving 600vdc electricity right where the members were working" said St. Hill.

Safety Director Carrano arrived and asked General Superintendent Shah (who has subsequently been reassigned to a desk job at 2 Broadway) to join the union to inspect and address this very serious condition. Shah declined and instead sent two superintendents. Together they found 27 main bugs to be hanging in an unsafe manner. GS Shah was still dismissive of the whole issue and stated that this was how the bugs were hung in all the



Photo By Dave Newman/NYCOSH

CED barns throughout the system. Walsh called several other Barn chairs to confirm what he already knew, which was that the bugs are hung pointed up in every other barn.

## Boss Calls Police

System safety and rail control were notified and Safety rep St. Hill called in all 27 units as unsafe and to be taken out of service with power removed. GS Shah responded by calling the police, and restoring power without first verifying it was safe. The police recognized the issue to be a labor/management dispute without any legal issues to address.

GS Shah stated several times in front of the police that System Safety had authorized him to restore power. Tom Carrano called System Safety and spoke to the person Shah claimed had authorized him to restore power. System Safety said that no such authorization had been given.

The union stood firm and refused to leave this matter unresolved. Carrano and Walsh cut power again, this time locking and tagging it out. This quickly rose to the top levels of both management and the union. Arriving at the scene were a CMO, ACMO, engineers and system safety/engineering.

TWU Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips, Vice President Nelson Rivera and Safety rep Lawrence Rafalovich also arrived on scene at approximately 10:00 p.m.

**Earl Phillips blasted management for its "total disregard for our members' safety," calling their actions "unacceptable."**

CMO Michael Wetherell stepped in and asked what it would take to get the operation up and running again. Carrano replied: "Simple, the same thing we suggested hours ago, repair what ever bent or broken hooks that we can, with any units that can not be repaired, just simply remove the fuse.

Management agreed. The issue was quickly resolved, ending hours of confrontation.

Carrano said: "It is ridiculous that we had to go to these lengths to address a safety issue, but in the end, a strong union stand won the day."

**Safety Hotline**  
**1-888-302-3727**  
**24-Hour Coverage**  
**[www.twulocal100.org](http://www.twulocal100.org)**



# TWU Local 100 Safety & Health Team

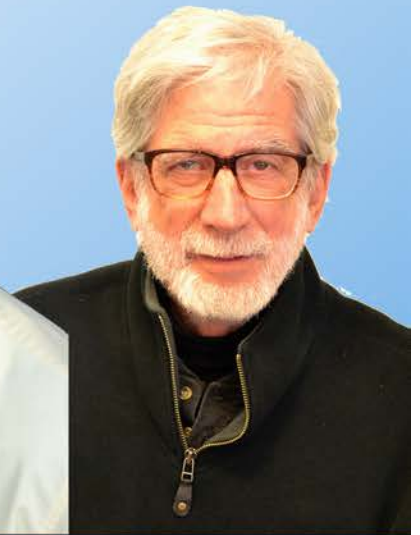
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**Lawrence Rafolovich**  
CED



**Steve St. Hill**  
Track



**Keith Cummings**  
Bus Maintenance



**Tom McGlynn**  
MTA Bus



**Harold Boro**  
MABSTOA



**Dennis Jones**  
RTO



**Tom McNally**  
TAS



**Vanessa Jones**  
Stations





*AT LOBBY DAY, LET'S SHOW*

# ZERO TOLERANCE

TO ANY MTA STONEWALLING,  
ALBANY ROADBLOCKS OR  
“NET ZERO” NONSENSE

JOIN THE FIGHT · GET ON THE BUS  
**TUESDAY, MARCH 25**

Check the union website for more information:  
[www.twulocal100.org](http://www.twulocal100.org)