NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

New Subway Line, New Subway Map

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The city's first new subway line in more than a decade begins rolling Sunday, along with a dramatic redrawing of the system's signature map.

Three months ago, the World Trade Center collapse destroyed 1,800 feet of tunnel on the 1 / 9 line, knocked the N and R out of commission for several weeks and jumbled service across the city.

Now, just as things were beginning to settle down, comes the brand-new V line, and with it major changes to the F and the G.

Never has the map, generally an unvarying affair, undergone such sudden upheaval.

Just ask David Jenkins.

Never heard of him? Odds are, you've seen his work. Jenkins is the graphic designer behind the MTA bus map, who, like countless others, was pressed into emergency duty after Sept. 11.

Because he had ready access to the computer file containing the subway map, Jenkins was thrust into the role of emergency cartographer.

"Things were changing rather quickly as the days went on," said New York City Transit spokesman Al O'Leary. "As the frozen zone changed, and we could get a station here and a station there, David would be able to make those changes in short order."

The map revisions produced by Jenkins appeared only on the MTA Web site and, periodically, on 11-by-17-inch handouts distributed at stations. They featured a "fresh on" date of sorts, e.g. "Subway Service as of Sun. 10 / 28."

As word came down of station reopenings and other changes, Jenkins made revisions on his Macintosh computer, and the redrawn map would appear on www.mta.info almost instantaneously. The site received 10 million hits a day in the week after Sept. 11, compared with just 250,000 before.

"We got an awful lot of comments, a lot of very appreciative remarks and letters," O'Leary said. "It's something we're not used to."

This week, for the first time since Sept. 11, up-to-date maps have also been posted. The five shuttered lower Manhattan stations are depicted in ghostly outline, alongside the words "Temporarily closed after Sept. 11, 2001."

All told, an estimated 23,000 of the full-sized, glass-encased station and on-board maps had to be replaced at a cost of about $90,000.

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