



Antelope Valley Transit Authority

Press Release

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AVTA RESPONDS TO SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE

LANCASTER – The Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA) is thankful a late night bomb threat turned out to be just a scare. AVTA’s Director of Operations and Maintenance Martin Tompkins called the actions of Bus Operator Stacy Hayes exemplary. “He responded exactly as he was trained to do in accordance with our safety policies,” stated Tompkins, “We are thankful it was a scare, but pleased that our operator put the safety of our riders above all other considerations.”

The operator was alerted to the suspicious plastic bag after a customer abruptly exited the bus, jumped a nearby brick wall and quickly ran off. Hayes conducted a walkthrough of the bus and discovered the black bag under a seat. He immediately evacuated the single passenger and called dispatch to report the suspicious package at 9:30 last night.

The Los Angeles County Sherriff’s Bomb Squad responded to the scene at Avenue J and Division Street in Lancaster. A one mile stretch of Avenue J was shut down for several hours while bomb squad investigators determined the plastic bag was filled with bottles and cans. Bomb Squad investigators praised the quick actions of Hayes calling his response “spot on”.

AVTA’s Executive Director Julie Austin stated, “We are very proud of the way Mr. Hayes handled this incident, and gives us confidence that our safety training is effective. This underscores the reminder - if you see something, say something. Those are words of advice from the Department of Homeland Security and here at AVTA they are words we take very seriously.”