

Metro to install 50th new escalator; project starts tonight

Tonight, Metro and its escalator contractor KONE will begin a project to install the system's 50th new escalator since 2011, Metro General Manager/CEO Paul J. Wiedefeld announced today. Over a two-year period, the project will replace the three entrance escalators at Waterfront Station in Southwest, DC.

In the past five years, Metro has installed 37 new escalators at the following stations: Bethesda, Branch Avenue, Brookland, Columbia Heights, Dupont Circle, Foggy Bottom, Friendship Heights, Georgia Ave-Petworth, Glenmont, Metro Center, Mt. Vernon Square, Pentagon, Van Ness and Woodley Park.

In addition, projects are currently underway to replace an additional 12 escalators.

Metro owns and maintains 618 escalators in its stations and parking garages, including the longest escalators in the Western Hemisphere at Wheaton Station.

The investments in replacing or rebuilding Metro's escalators has yielded positive results for customers. In 2015, Metro's escalator availability rate reached 93.3 percent, the best annual performance in five years.

The work at Waterfront Station will begin Monday night after the station closes. Each escalator is expected to take 35 weeks to replace, including site preparation, demolition, construction, installation and testing. For safety reasons, most of the work will be done during overnight hours.

Waterfront Station's entrance will remain open to customers during the project with one escalator running up and one running down.