

A nighttime photograph of a railway track. The tracks lead from the foreground into the distance, where they cross. Overhead power lines and signal masts are visible against a dark sky. The scene is illuminated by warm yellow lights and some green signal lights.

# EAT•N

Eaton UPS Service Plan **Helps**  
Keep Santa Clara VTA Railway  
System on Track

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# Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority relies on Eaton to keep railway system on track



Eaton measures customer satisfaction on 100% of on-site visits and parts shipments

If the uninterruptible power system (UPS) that helps protect rail system operations for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) were ever to fail, the result could be a virtual train wreck, causing the entire rail system to slow down and run in a backup mode.

Providing backup emergency power for the entire rail system community, including trackside services and all signals, the organization's 80 kVA, three-phase UPS is tasked with an extremely critical role in the ongoing operation of the railway, that serves some 10 million riders each year.

"It's the heart and soul of our business here," reveals Merle Giles, facility maintenance representative for the Santa Clara VTA, located in Northern California's Bay Area. "We could always go back to hand signals and flags, but I don't think that would go over very well," he adds with a laugh.

Thanks in part to an Eaton® service plan — which is

instrumental in ensuring the continual health of the UPS — the prospect of revisiting those old-fashioned measures is easily avoided by the railway, which operates a fleet of 100 low-floor light rail vehicles along a 42.2-mile rail system. Each year, the trains collectively log 143,816 hours of operation and travel a combined total of more than 2 million miles.

The original manufacturer of the UPS, International Power Machines (IPM), was acquired by Exide Electronics in 1995, with its UPS line rolled into the Powerware® product family. Eaton continues to provide service for IPM units along with those from similar legacy brands like Deltec and Best Power. Overseeing the role of "conductor" for care of the railway's UPS is Eaton customer service engineer (CSE) Stewart Harris.

As part of Eaton's ProActive Service Plan, Harris performs routine preventive maintenance on the UPS twice a year, completing a variety

**Industry:**  
Railway

**Application:**  
Entire rail system

**UPS:**  
IPM BP III

**Service Coverage:**  
ProActive Service Plan

**Eaton CSE:**  
Stewart Harris

of tests and inspections such as reviewing the batteries, fans, filters and capacitors; executing load balancing evaluations; and carrying out wiring checks.

"Stewart has been my go-to guy," Giles reports. "What is it that I value about him? Just about everything."

To begin with, notes Giles, is the CSE's professional appearance. "He has a uniform with his identification on it and his name tag," he explains. "You can just tell he knows his job."

But Harris' professionalism clearly extends beyond his appearance, notes Giles, who is quick to highlight the CSE's superior level of product expertise.

"He has been exceptionally trained," he explains. "I don't have to follow him around when he comes to work on the UPS. He keeps me completely advised of everything that is being done along the way."

Furthermore, upon completion of any service procedure, Harris prints out a comprehensive status report of key UPS operations, which includes a list of all tests and checks conducted.

"He's the consummate professional," Giles explains. "I think he gets up in the morning, packs his lunch, comes to work and then is completely, 100 percent focused on doing his job." Bob Warlick, Harris' service manager, agrees, noting that the technician was recently promoted to a senior level

CSE. "He's very technically sound," he confirms. "Stewart is willing to go anywhere, anytime. He's very much a team player. Everybody just loves him, and loves working with him."

In fact, Harris' expertise has been tapped to assist with the training of up-and-coming Eaton service technicians, with whom he works on a regular basis. "He's been an excellent mentor," says Warlick.

The ongoing support Harris has provided to the Santa Clara VTA was also instrumental in the organization recently renewing its service contract with Eaton. Acknowledging that as a government agency, the VTA's service contracts must routinely go out to bid, Giles reveals, "I love knowing that I have the backup and support of the mother company behind me."



**Eaton CSEs are trained on units from legacy brands such as IPM, Powerware, Deltec, Exide Electronics and Best Power**

In addition to the peace of mind that comes from being backed by the resources and reputation of Eaton, Giles cites another factor that sets the UPS manufacturer apart from other third-party service providers: its CSEs. Among the various qualities that distinguish Harris from other providers, according to Giles, is the fact that the technician always arrives on time.

“To me, one of the most important things is someone who is prompt,” he explains, noting that not all vendors display the same level of reliability.

“But with Stewart, he’s on time, he knows what he’s here for, and he does it,” Giles says matter-of-factly. “When you’re out here as a facility maintenance representative like I am, you really rely on your vendors. Working with Stewart is always pleasant. It’s nice. He’s a great technician.”

To meet the individual service requirements of organizations across a wide range of industries and applications, Eaton employs more than 240 factory-trained CSEs throughout the United States, who deliver the same high level of service as Harris.

With a full spectrum of available plans, Eaton offers an array of unique service advantages, including:

- Factory-trained field technicians with expert knowledge of Eaton UPS products
- A wide range of warranties, preventive services and service contracts
- Readily available parts from the technician or from a central location
- Deep support infrastructure of design engineers, technical support, back office resources and other experts to complement our field resources
- Value-added support such as remote monitoring
- Safety program and insurance

To read more customer testimonials about our network of CSEs, please visit [www.powerware.com/UPSservices](http://www.powerware.com/UPSservices).



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