

# Roxbury

80° | traffic | transit

*BLOW OFF SOME STEAM AT THE DRIVING RANGE* **Deals**



**Boston Deals**  
from *boston.com*

SUBSCRIBE NOW Click here for deals YOU want.

home news events discussions search

< Back to front page

Text size - +

ROXBURY

## Self-cleaning restroom added to Dudley Station

Posted by Matt Rocheleau July 1, 2011 02:56 PM

E-mail | Print | Comments ()

Recommend Tweet 4 Share Share5 E-mail



(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

The new Dudley Station automated pay restroom along the bus hub's Dudley Street side.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

**Aimed at providing relief to on-the-go commuters, an automated pay restroom facility has been installed at Dudley Station.**

Until last weekend, the busy bus hub was void of publicly-accessible bathrooms. Now, for the price of one quarter, an automated toilet- and sink-equipped facility, which self-sanitizes and disinfects after each use, is available.

“There’s a big health issue and public safety issue when you have 30,000 people going through there each day with no public toilets,” said Peter O’Sullivan, director of the city’s [Coordinated Street Furniture Program](#).

The toilet located on the station’s Dudley Street side is one of eight installed in Boston over the past decade through a

### Connect to Roxbury



Connect to Your Town Roxbury on Facebook

Like

You like **Your Town Roxbury** · Admin



Follow @RoxburyUpdate on Twitter

Follow

Click here to follow Your Town Roxbury on Twitter.

ADVERTISEMENT

### ROXBURY REAL ESTATE »

67

Homes for sale

20

Rentals available

0

Open houses this week

0

New listings this week

### CAMP GUIDE »

**A camp for every kid!**

Adventure, sports, theater, music, arts or technology—find the perfect camp for your child at [boston.com/campguide](http://boston.com/campguide).



ADVERTISEMENT

contract, which runs for about the next 15 years, with German company Wall AG and French company JCDecaux, O' Sullivan said. Since that contract was signed about one decade ago, JCDecaux has acquired a majority stake in Wall AG.



(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

Inside the Dudley restroom.

The city leases portions of its property to have the restroom and other types of "street furniture" – like bus shelters, city information panels, news kiosks and telephone pillars – installed, he said. In exchange for the leased space and the right for the company to post advertisements on the facilities, the private company installs and manages the facilities through remote, automated monitoring and daily technician inspections.

The city pays nothing.

In fact, O'Sullivan explained, the city profits from the arrangement by sharing a percentage of the revenue from the approximately 925 advertising spaces that have been installed through the street furniture initiative across Boston.

Last year, the city brought in between \$700,000 and 800,000 through the ad revenue deal on top of a \$1.5-million fixed fee the city collected, he said. Additionally, around one-quarter of the ad space is used for public service advertisements – especially on the eight restrooms which advertisers are typically not all that interested in posting marketing campaigns on, O'Sullivan said.

The Dudley Square facility is the only street furniture program bathroom installed on MBTA property, he said. As part of the deal, no paid-advertisements, only public services ads, will be posted on the facility's exterior, which also features two pay phones.

The restroom grants up to 25 minutes per use, is handicapped accessible and allows users an option to have the toilet located on the right, left or in the center before they enter. That feature is designed to aid some elderly and disabled people who can have an easier time entering the restroom from one side or the other, O'Sullivan said.

The facility opened Saturday at a ceremony attended by the mayor, the T's general manager, community organizations, activists and residents.

On Monday, people at Dudley Station had mixed feelings about the new toilet.

Neighborhood resident Amadu Bah has run a shop inside the station for six years. He welcomes the new facility because commuters are constantly asking shop owners and employees at the station's



### Roxbury Headlines »

- RoxVote Coalition to host first picnic with city, state elected officials (3 days ago)
- Nonprofit assists area homeowners with federal mortgage relief application (7/1)
- Residents celebrate revival of Roxbury recreational complex (7/1)

### Also From Roxbury

#### COMMUNITY



Notable Roxbury residents

#### NIGHTLIFE



Diamond in the rough

#### SOUTH END-ROXBURY LINE



Residents face identity crisis

#### EATING LOCALLY



On the street where you live



Local advertising by PaperG



(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

Inside the Dudley restroom.

Dunkin Donuts, “where’s the bathroom, where’s the bathroom,” he said, adding that he had not yet used the facility himself.

Janice Davis, visiting Boston from Jacksonville, Fla., said she had dropped a quarter in earlier that day only to find the facility had been vandalized.

“They mess it up for all the nice people,” she said of the vandals. “It’s filthy. It’s

nasty. It’s not right. It’s sad.”

A day later, community activist Lee Buckley who had long advocated for the new bathroom facility, confirmed, “none of it is working.”

But on Thursday afternoon, a technician, who asked not to be named, was on site making repairs and demonstrated how he’d put the facility back in working order. He said he suspected the facility had been vandalized six days before, on the first day it had opened.

He and O’Sullivan each explained the technology works well and is reliable. But, unfortunately, almost equally as reliable is that someone will eventually, either accidentally or purposefully, not use the bathroom properly.

When that happens, fixes usually take only a few hours, because any malfunction sends a computerized alert to technicians. Though, O’Sullivan said sometimes the delay can be a bit longer if replacement parts need to be ordered.

“It’s for the community and if everyone takes care of it; it works great,” the technician said. “Cleaner than the one at your home.”

Normally, he explained, the toilet will automatically put itself out of order once it detects an error and remain unusable until the technician arrives.

The suspected weekend vandalism may have explained why the bathroom’s electronic display read late Monday afternoon that the facility is only open from 2 a.m. to 3 p.m., which was perplexing to and criticized by many at the station.

But, the hours are usually from around 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. at such facilities, said O’Sullivan, adding that the city is working to make the Dudley Station toilet accessible from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. as some in the neighborhood have requested in order to also cater to early-morning and late-night bus riders.

Whether it was because of the vandalism or another factor, the Dudley Station restroom said it had closed at 3 p.m. Monday and would not open for one man who, at around 5 p.m., dropped a quarter into the mechanized booth while holding the hand of a squirming young girl. Others nearby quickly told the duo the facility, which says those 10 and under should be accompanied by an adult, was out of commission. They left the station, hurrying down Dudley Street.

“The females and the children are the ones that suffer,” without nearby access

## Roxbury On Twitter »

RoxVote Coalition to host 1st picnic with city, state electeds 7/13 @FranklinParkBos @MassVote - <http://bo.st/pQa4Ye> about 2 hours ago

RoxVote to host 1st picnic w. city, state electeds 7/13 @Jeffrey\_Sanchez @RepHenriquez @BostonNAACP1911 @DSNI\_org - <http://bo.st/pQa4Ye> about 2 hours ago

RoxVote to host 1st picnic w. city, state electeds 7/13 @MadisonParkDC @FelixArroyo @JohnRConnolly @TitoJackson - <http://bo.st/pQa4Ye> about 2 hours ago

RoxVote Coalition to host first picnic with city, state elected Follow other Boston.com Tweets | What is Twitter?



to a public bathroom, said lifelong Roxbury resident Donald Garrett.

Garrett knows well how challenging finding a restroom around the station can be. The 56-year-old Vietnam Navy veteran is homeless.

After Garrett's suggestion that the Dudley bathroom in particular accept Charlie Card payments was relayed to O'Sullivan, the city official said it's something he plans to look into with JCDecaux. Though he wondered whether such a system would be efficient to install since the toilet's price per use is only 25 cents.

O'Sullivan said the idea for the street furniture program is similar to an initiative in San Francisco that Mayor Thomas M. Menino learned of during a conference trip there years ago.

The first restroom facility was installed on Congress Street near City Hall through Boston's street furniture program 10 years ago.

The others are at Popuolo Park in the North End; at the Charlestown Navy Yard; in front of the Boston Public Library headquarters in Copley Square; in front of the Boston Design Center on Drydock Ave. in South Boston; near the Marriott Long Wharf hotel; and in front of the New England Aquarium, which O'Sullivan said is one of the most-used in the world among the toilets JCDecaux owns and manages.

O'Sullivan said he can be contacted to report vandalism, graffiti or other issues with street furniture at [Peter.O'Sullivan@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Peter.O'Sullivan@cityofboston.gov).

E-mail Matt Rocheleau at [mjrochele@gmail.com](mailto:mjrochele@gmail.com).



(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

The restroom has instructions on its front doors and an electronic panel displaying the facility's hours, availability and other information.

[Recommend](#) [Tweet](#) 4 [Share](#) 5 [E-mail](#)

[◀ Previous entry](#)

[Next entry ▶](#)

### MORE FROM BOSTON.COM

An e-mail you don't want to get, courtesy of 'James Bulger' (*Your Town*)

'Ted' filming on the Esplanade this weekend (*Your Town*)

Dad leaves clues to his desperation (*Local News*)

Ortiz regrets altercation (*Sports*)

Sox cheered by this victory (*Sports*)

Fire strikes apartments in Quincy (*Local News*)

### MORE FROM THE WEB

Why Pick a Purple Potato? (*Chow.com*)

Roasted Red Pepper Tart Recipe (*Chow.com*)

Greek Lemon Potatoes (*The Daily Meal*)

Woman Assaulted in Bar After Rejecting Man's Advances A 29-year-old nurse was followed into the women's room and severely beaten in a bathroom stall. (*Betty Confidential*)

Top 10 Signs of a Bad Cook (*Chow.com*)

Kid Sells Kidney for iPad 2, Regrets Transaction (*PC World*)

[Sponsored links]



### READER COMMENTS »

[View reader comments \( \)](#) » [Comment on this story](#) »

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Events](#) | [Schools](#) | [Sports](#) | [Discussions](#) | [Marketplace](#)

[Contact Us](#) | [Contact Boston.com](#) | [Contact The Boston Globe](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Your Ad Choices](#) | [Help](#) | [Advertise](#) | © 2011 NY Times Co.

GRAB A QUICK OIL  
CHANGE OR CAR WASH **Deals**

**Boston Deals**  
from *boston.com*

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Click here for deals **YOU** want.