

# TMER&L #L6



Type: Interurban Crane Car

Built - 1911

Rebuilt 1929

Seats - n/a

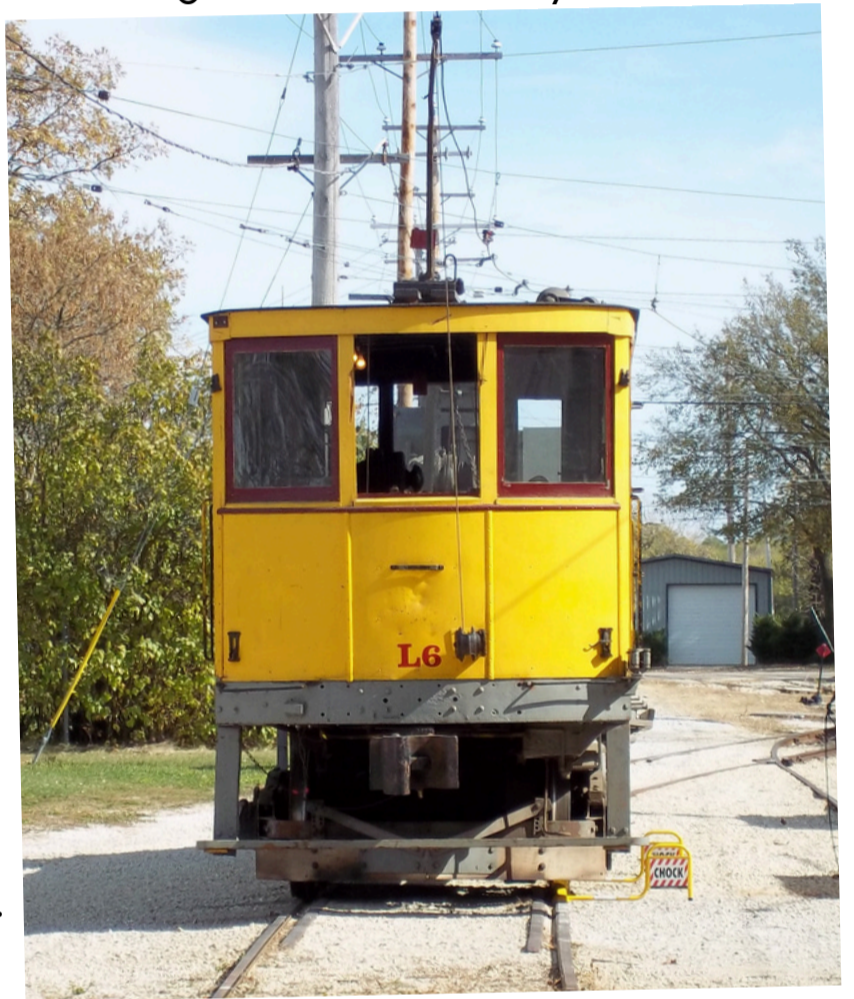
Length – 45' 0"

Weight – 53, 120 pounds



During the early 1900s, expansive trolley and electric interurban rail lines sprawled across America. The Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company (TMER&L) operated approximately 130 miles of interurban lines across southeastern Wisconsin, and lines radiated out of Milwaukee to Kenosha, Watertown, Burlington, and East Troy.

As the TMER&L expanded its interurban services and bought the Milwaukee Northern interurban railroad between northern Milwaukee and Sheboygan, more work cars and track gangs were needed to keep the hundreds of miles of tracks, overhead wires, and yards in service. During this time, utility and sprinkler cars were ordered from the St. Louis Car Company.



L6 originally was a sprinkler car, used to keep dust off of city streets, in 1911, but was rebuilt into a utility crane car in 1929 at Cold Springs. L6 operates as a trolley built on top of a flat car with a crane and air compressor on the back. The car was very useful to the TMER&L in trackwork, frequently being used to lay and relay the heavy pieces of rail and ties in the "Devil's Teapot" swamp in Muskego, where the tracks to East Troy were laid, and on the many bridges along the line to Watertown where I-94 currently sits.

In 1963, the TMER&L and its successors had shut down interurban and street railway service, and L6 was received by the Wisconsin Electric Power Company, where many pieces of ex-TMER&L equipment were kept at both the Lakeside and Port Washington Power Plants. L6 went to Lakeside, like most of the equipment. L6 was rarely, if ever, used at Lakeside, old trolley locomotives designed for freight service were used to haul coal from the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad to the plant.

In 1972, the car was received by the Wisconsin Electric Railway Historical Society and moved to East Troy, where a museum operation had begun on the last segment of TMER&L track. L6 continues to work at East Troy, helping with trackwork, material movements, and weed spraying.

