

# Soil Sampling and Clean Up Efforts Continue in East Palestine

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio – Soil removal work continues at the derailment site. This work includes conducting soil sampling, removing tracks in sections, removing soil, and placing it in a staging area for testing and disposal. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues to closely oversee Norfolk Southern's disposal of waste to ensure its safe removal.

During excavation activities, EPA and Norfolk Southern are conducting air monitoring within the work zone and throughout the surrounding community. While EPA does not anticipate exceedances of levels of health concern as a result of the removal work, we are carefully overseeing this work to ensure residents' safety. This includes continue round-the-clock air monitoring at the site and throughout the community as well as the use of EPA's Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) mobile laboratory which is conducting an air monitoring route near the soil excavation area. Additional perimeter air monitoring stations have been deployed at eight locations around the rail work zone.

## Operational Updates

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- Soil sampling and inspections continue throughout the high priority areas in the East Palestine area. Agricultural properties and community spaces are a high priority given the upcoming spring season. EPA and Norfolk Southern contractors have collected 30 soil samples and 18 sites have been inspected.
- EPA has conducted 604 home re-entry screenings to date and continues 24/7 air monitoring at 23 stations throughout the community. No detections of vinyl chloride or hydrogen chloride have been identified.
- EPA's community welcome center at 25 North Market Street continues to be open to the community from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day.
- EPA personnel have been on the ground since the onset of the train derailment, working alongside federal, state, and local partners. Read details at [EPA's East Palestine, Ohio Train Derailment Emergency Response website](#).

See operational updates from other agencies supporting this incident response below.

## ORSANCO

- ORSANCO has continued to utilize its Organics Detection System (ODS) to monitor the Ohio River in the unlikely event that any additional diluted chemical remnants from the East Palestine Train Derailment reach the Ohio River. It is important to note that six of the ODS system's units, that are located downstream from the Little Beaver Creek's intersection with the Ohio River, are GC Mass Spectrometers. These are very sophisticated instruments that can detect thousands of volatile organic chemicals in addition to the 30 for which the system is calibrated to detect and quantify. It was one of these units that first detected the spill remnants from the East Palestine Train that initially reached the Ohio River several weeks ago. Most of the chemicals included in the East Palestine Train manifest are able to be detected through the utilization of these units.

## Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

- The Department of Environmental Protection found no contamination in first results from groundwater sampling near the derailment site and will continue to sample in the months to come. [Read the DEP Report on First Results from Independent Water Sampling](#).

## Pennsylvania Department of Health

- Pennsylvania Department of Health extends operation of Health Resource Center for Pennsylvania residents. [Read the release on extended operation.](#)

## Health and Human Services (HHS) and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

- CDC/ATSDR will shift staff from the field to complete data analysis of the Assessment of Chemical Exposure (ACE) investigation. CDC and ATSDR will continue to support the health departments in Ohio and Pennsylvania to address the public health needs of the region.

## Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

- FEMA has been working closely with the state since the beginning of this incident and has been in constant contact regarding emergency operations since February 4—less than 12 hours after the train derailment.
- In total, FEMA deployed 70 personnel to help coordinate this multiagency effort and get the people of East Palestine connected to critical information and resources.
- Specifically, FEMA recently supported Interagency Community Outreach teams with door-to-door outreach in the affected area, sharing valuable information with residents and businesses.
- These teams engaged with affected residents in the community and more than 2,200 flyers were distributed to individuals or dropped off at their homes and businesses.

## Department of Transportation (DOT) & National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)

- DOT's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) recently urged all railroad operators to create and maintain emergency response plans for the transport of hazardous materials, strengthen the accessibility of the AskRail system, and inform PHMSA when they identify responders who are not able to access PHMSA's grant-funded training. Read the [PHMSA Safety Advisory Notice: Railroad Emergency Preparedness](#).
- NTSB, an independent federal agency, is leading the investigation into the cause of the derailment. Read [NTSBs recently issued an Investigative Update](#) with factual findings on their investigation on the ground.
- Within hours of the derailment, staff from the Federal Railroad Administration and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration staff were on the scene to support the NTSB investigation.
- Upon completion of the investigation, DOT will use all relevant authorities to ensure accountability and improve safety.
- DOT is demanding immediate actions from the Class I railroads, announcing continued and expanded action from DOT, and calling on Congress to take actions that will hold the industry accountable.

## Norfolk Southern Corporation

- Norfolk Southern has agreed to provide additional financial assistance that may include temporary lodging, travel, food, clothing, and other necessities. This assistance will be available to residents of the East Palestine area (including the portions of Pennsylvania within a mile of the derailment site). The relocation offer is completely voluntary and is being provided as an option and a resource to interested residents to ensure they feel comfortable throughout the track work. Residents who would like to take advantage of this offer should contact the NS resource hotline at (800) 230-7049 (24hr) or visit the Family Assistance Center at Abundant Life Church in New Waterford, OH.