

Updates from East Palestine Response

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio – Northern track removal and excavation are underway and are expected to take a few weeks to complete. Trains are operating on the southern track in both directions. During work on the northern track, EPA and NS conduct air monitoring within the work zone, worker air monitoring and throughout the surrounding community. Perimeter air monitoring stations have been deployed at locations around the rail work zone.

EPA's Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) and two NS-contracted Proton-Transfer-Reaction Mass Spectrometer (PTR- MS) mobile units continue air monitoring for volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and butyl acrylate during work operations. Two portable air monitoring units call HAPSITE units are onsite – one is currently in use for downwind butyl acrylate receptor screening. A second HAPSITE is being evaluated for additional applications.

Soil and debris placed in containers have been prioritized for removal and off-site treatment or disposal this week.

Response By the Numbers *(as of the morning of April 27, 2023)*

- **35,111 tons est. of contaminated soil shipped (+3,247 tons)**
- **13,802,301 gallons (+966,011 gallons) of liquid waste shipped to date**
- **631 indoor air screenings conducted**
- **493 private well samples collected**
- **The Welcome Center has received 682 visitors**

What to expect this week

Cleanup and excavation of the northern track began April 22. The southern track is an active rail line.

At the derailment site:

- Contaminated soil and waste stockpiles are covered overnight and when not in use.
- Vapor suppressants are used to address odor and vapor issues associated with excavation activities.
- EPA continues to document all excavation activities including soil confirmation sampling prior to restoration. Trains are operating in both directions on the southern track.

In the greater community:

- EPA's Welcome Center will close Sundays beginning Sunday, May 7.
- Monday through Saturday, the EPA Welcome Center will continue to remain open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Air monitoring continues at 23 locations around the community. Review of data supports air monitoring trends that air quality has remained below screening levels.
- The Way Station and First United Presbyterian at 109 W. Rebecca St. in East Palestine will host an information session about drinking water well sampling with staff from Columbiana County Health District Thursday, May 4 from 6 - 7 p.m.

Air Quality

EPA continues to receive preliminary air sampling data. Review of the data supports air monitoring trends that air quality has remained below screening levels. Preliminary data are currently being validated prior to being finalized.

On Thursday, April 27, EPA participated in an air monitoring and sampling information session at the First United Presbyterian Church in East Palestine. Thirty members of the community attended the event and asked questions about air monitoring and sampling, indoor air screening and health concerns. A meeting recording will be available via YouTube in the coming week.

Soil Removal at the Derailment Site

Excavation of contaminated soil around the northern track began last week and continues. Excavated soils are shipped off-site for proper disposal, and clean dirt is brought in to fill the excavated areas.

Asbestos-containing material (ACM) was identified on the north track work area within a debris pile; ACM and affected debris will be managed and disposed of in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations (ongoing). ACM has been properly labeled, containerized, and is awaiting off-site transportation and disposal (11 roll-off containers).

Liquid Waste Removal

Wastewater is collected to ensure water does not leave the derailment site or staging piles of contaminated soil. Wastewater is generated after rain falls on contaminated soil and is collected from cleaning and washing trucks before they leave the site.

Soil Sampling

Sampling associated with Phase I of the Preliminary Residential/ Commercial/Agricultural Soil Sampling Plan is complete. Sample results are provided to property owners over the phone and in writing.

Preliminary soil sampling results are expected to be posted to EPA's East Palestine Train Derailment [response page](#) this week.

Drinking and Groundwater Sampling

Ohio EPA continues to conduct drinking water testing of East Palestine municipal water wells on a weekly basis, as well as weekly sampling of wells located between the municipal wells and the derailment site. These wells were installed to monitor for potential groundwater contamination that could be moving toward the municipal wells.

Water Quality Monitoring

Norfolk Southern continues surface water sampling of affected waterways daily under Ohio EPA oversight. Sediment samples were collected and are anticipated to be received next week.

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