

Updates from the East Palestine Train Derailment Emergency Response

EAST PALESTINE, OH (May 31, 2023) –Norfolk Southern continues to excavate the north track and excavation is complete at burn pits 1 and 2. Waste shipments are expected to continue into June. EPA and Norfolk Southern continue to conduct air monitoring in the work zone and in the surrounding community. Perimeter air monitoring stations are located around the rail work zone.

While the cleanup is ongoing, EPA is reviewing work plans for further assessment and cleanup that will ensure community safety in the years that come.

Response By the Numbers *(as of May 29, 2023)*

- 53,626 tons (estimated) of solid waste shipped
- 19,713,116 gallons (estimated) of liquid waste shipped
- 667 private well samples collected
- 1,049 EPA assistance line calls received
- 827 visits to the Welcome Center

This Week

Norfolk Southern continues to excavate the north track area. Crews have sampled the ‘centerline’ area between the north and south tracks and are awaiting results to determine if additional excavation is needed.

On June 1, from 6 to 7 p.m., EPA will host the National Institutes of Health (NIH) at the Way Station at First United Presbyterian Church in East Palestine. NIH will discuss a series of workshops they will hold to evaluate the public health research needs in East Palestine and surrounding areas. [Here is the flyer for the events.](#)

June 2-4, EPA will be at the Darlington Days festival in Darlington, Pennsylvania, with activities for children and educational materials.

What to Expect Next Week

On June 6, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., EPA will host an information session on public health with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) at the First United Presbyterian Church in East Palestine. Residents are encouraged to submit questions in advance using EPA’s [East Palestine Train Derailment Local Area Resident Inquiry web form.](#)

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.
- Lack of rain has created more dust than normal during site 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:

- 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 Welcome Center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and closed on Sunday. The Welcome Center will be open during the Darlington Days.

Air Quality

EPA continues to review preliminary and final air sampling data, which supports air monitoring trends that air quality has remained below screening levels.

Soil Removal at the Derailment Site

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

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.

Full-Site Characterization

EPA is reviewing Norfolk Southern plans to conduct extensive assessment work in areas surrounding the impacted tracks, including potentially impacted waterways.

Soil Sampling

Sampling associated with Phase I of the Preliminary Residential/Commercial/Agricultural Soil Sampling Plan is complete. Sample results have been provided to property owners over the phone and in writing. Preliminary EPA results and validated Norfolk Southern results are posted on EPA's website: [EPA and Norfolk Southern Residential, Commercial and Agricultural Soil Sampling Results](#). Validated EPA results are expected within the next two weeks.

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 daily surface water sampling of affected waterways under Ohio EPA oversight. Sediment samples were collected and are anticipated to be received during the next operational period.

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