

Updates from the East Palestine Train Derailment Emergency Response

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio (September 1, 2023) – EPA has approved a workplan to allow Norfolk Southern to treat hazardous wastewater on-site to remove vinyl chloride and other contaminants. This treated wastewater can be disposed of off-site as a non-hazardous waste. Currently, the train derailment site generates one million gallons of wastewater per week from excavation-related stormwater collection.

Treating the wastewater on-site to ship as non-hazardous will have many benefits for the community including fewer wastewater hauling trucks in the community at any one time, a smaller operational footprint of the site, and significantly fewer hazardous-waste shipments transported through East Palestine and other communities nationally.

The wastewater treatment system itself will not cause additional noise disruption in the community. There will be no impacts to air, surface water, or soil. The system is temporary and meant to be on-site until soil contamination has been removed and it is no longer needed.

Excavation of contaminated soil is underway at the South Ditch area and in Car Scrapping Area 4 on the south side of the tracks. Sheet piling installation is ongoing as needed along the South Ditch and in Car Scrapping Area 4 to ensure soil stability and reduce groundwater infiltration. This activity will continue through the month of September.

Sediment sampling in Sulphur Run and Leslie Run is complete. The data will be used to assess impacts on the streams from the derailment. Surface water sampling continues. In addition to surface water sample collection, fish surveys are also being performed in Leslie Run. Unified Command partners will evaluate the data over the next several weeks.

Contaminated soil, debris, and any water used to decontaminate trucks before leaving the site continue to be removed for off-site treatment and disposal.

The EPA Welcome Center is closed for Labor Day weekend, from Saturday, September 2, through Monday, September 4. Work on the train derailment site will continue over the Labor Day weekend, including Monday, September 4.

Indoor cleaning of eligible homes and businesses is being offered to address potential dust emissions generated as part of the derailment and cleanup work. Owners and renters may express interest by filling out the online form (link below), calling the EPA hotline, or visiting the EPA Community Welcome Center. The deadline to express interest will be extended to September 14. Additional information can be found on the EPA website.

- Website: <https://www.epa.gov/east-palestine-oh-train-derailment/home-and-office-cleaning>
- Interest form: <https://www.epa.gov/east-palestine-oh-train-derailment/forms/express-interest-home-and-office-cleaning>

The next biweekly edition of the East Palestine Train Derailment Response newsletter is planned for September 7. All newsletters are available on the EPA [website](#).

Response by the Numbers

- 100,401 tons (estimated) of solid waste shipped (*as of August 31, 2023*)

- 32,350,336 gallons (estimated) of liquid waste shipped (*as of August 31, 2023*)
- 1,223 EPA assistance line calls received (*as of August 31, 2023*)
- 1023 visits to the Welcome Center (*as of August 31, 2023*)

What to Expect Next Week

At the derailment site:

- On-site wastewater treatment: reviewing the results from two days of testing and making any needed modifications before resuming testing. Off-site disposal of treated wastewater may begin.
- Car Scrapping Area 4: Ongoing excavation and related management of infiltrating groundwater.
- Structure (home & office) cleaning began Wednesday, August 23. Interviews are being scheduled with homeowners. Deadline to apply will be extended to September 14.
- Contaminated soil excavation from South Ditch will continue EPA will continue to oversee all excavation activities, including post-excavation soil sampling, prior to restoration of excavated areas.
- Implementation of groundwater characterization will continue.
- The EPA Welcome Center is closed Saturday, September 2 through Monday, September 4 for Labor Day weekend.
- Work at the site will continue as normal on Labor Day weekend, including Monday, September 4.

In the greater community:

- Air monitoring around the perimeter of the derailment area continues with stationary air monitors and two mobile units.
- Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is replacing the bridge over Leslie Run in East Palestine. ODOT is expected to continue working on this project. This work is not related to the East Palestine Derailment. For more information contact ODOT at 330-308-7817.