

Updates from the East Palestine Train Derailment Emergency Response

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio (September 15, 2023) –

- Full site assessment (or characterization) has begun. EPA, leading the Unified Command to the EPTD emergency response, has approved the workplan for the next phase of cleanup. The “soil characterization” workplan details the final comprehensive sampling as the cleanup enters the last stages of excavation. Sampling began this week and is intended to be a “double-check” to ensure that the cleanup has been fully successful and that no contamination has spread due to response activities. In all, more than 2,500 samples will be collected as part of this plan.

This workplan has been in preparation since the early days of the response and is a long-awaited milestone in the cleanup. If residual contamination is discovered through these efforts, EPA will direct further cleanup actions as needed.

Although areas at and near East Palestine Park will be assessed, there has been no evidence of spills in that area, other than known contamination in creek sediments. A previous assessment of the East Palestine Park conducted in March did not show any contamination above background levels for combustion-related chemicals. More information about the soil characterization plan is on EPA’s [Full Characterization Workplan](#) webpage.

- Indoor cleaning of eligible homes and businesses and pre-cleaning interviews continue. To date, 25 structures have been cleaned, and 69 pre-cleaning interviews have been completed.
- Sediment Sampling in Leslie Run and Sulphur Run has been completed and data is expected in the coming weeks. The characterization of surface water continues.
- The on-site wastewater treatment plant is operating 24/7 and non-hazardous treated wastewater is now being shipped off-site for disposal to an EPA approved facility.
- The next biweekly edition of the East Palestine Train Derailment Response newsletter is planned for September 21. All editions of the newsletter to date are available on the EPA [website](#).

Response by the Numbers (as of September 15, 2023)

- 113,873 tons (estimated) of solid waste shipped (as of 9/13/23)
- 33,332,968 gallons (estimated) of liquid waste shipped (as of 9/13/23)
- 1,255 EPA assistance line calls received
- 1,041 visits to the Welcome Center
- 25 structure cleanings completed

What to Expect Next Week

At the derailment site:

- N. Pleasant Drive is scheduled to be closed starting on September 25 for approximately 10 days from E. Martin Street to E. Taggart Street. The closure will allow the installation of sheet piling and the excavation of contaminated soil underneath the road at the rail crossing.
- Contaminated soil excavation from South Ditch and Car Scrapping 4 will continue. EPA will continue to oversee all excavation activities, including post-excavation soil sampling, prior to restoration of excavated areas.

- Sitewide characterization will continue in areas near the derailment location where equipment, materials, and debris were handled as part of the overall emergency response.

In the greater community:

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