

Updates from East Palestine Response

April 12, 2023

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio – Norfolk Southern continues to make progress cleaning up the derailment site, and expects that by the end of the week it will have achieved a major milestone with completion of the cleanup and restoration of the south track that runs through the derailment site. The company is reinstalling the rails on the south track after testing has shown all soil affected by the derailment on that side has been removed. The work is expected to be completed by Friday, at which time Norfolk Southern will begin limited use of the south track.

The company is also completing engineering work for the north track and will begin preparations to stop traffic on that side and remove the rails. This work is likely to start next week. Norfolk Southern and the Unified Command will continue to work closely as soil removal and remediation work gets underway on the north side track.

Air monitoring will continue at 23 locations around the community and EPA's Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) mobile laboratory will continue to monitor air.

Air sparging has been completed within Leslie Run and Sulphur Run at the East Palestine City Park. Air sparging is a common cleanup technique which involves putting air into the water so that oxygen and microbes break down chemicals. Next steps will include continued cleaning of the sediment in both streams. People should avoid recreating in the streams while this work continues.

Norfolk Southern has changed the hours of operation for its Family Assistance Center at New Life Church in New Waterford, Ohio, and its 800-230-7049 assistance phone line. The new hours are Monday through Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Both the FAC and assistance phone line will be closed on Sundays.

Response By the Numbers *(as of the morning of April 11, 2023)*

- **21,522 tons est. (+1,556 tons) of contaminated soil shipped**
- **11,580,219 gallons (+155,241 gallons) of liquid waste shipped to date**
- **630 indoor air screenings**
- **324 private well samples conducted**
- **The Welcome Center has received 522 visitors**

What to expect this week

Water is being pumped around the derailment site to prevent contamination from being carried downstream. Pumps near State Line Lake carry clean water past the derailment site to where it is pumped back into Sulphur Run. The pumping operation is also protecting the wetlands area near State Line Lake.

The excavation of the south track is nearing completion and soil waste is continuing to be shipped off-site for disposal. After the south track excavation finishes and the track is reconstructed, limited use of the track will begin. People can expect to see rail cars traveling on the south track. In addition, the excavation can begin on the north track. Planning is currently underway for the north track excavation.

At the derailment site:

- Continued heavy truck traffic along designated routes.
- Taggart Street remains closed to the public.
- Excavation work and backfilling on the south track will near completion.
- Excavated soil and collected wastewater will continue to be shipped off-site.

In the greater community:

- EPA's Community Welcome Center remains open to the public from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. EPA staff are available to answer questions and address concerns.
- Air monitoring will continue at 23 locations around the community. EPA's Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) mobile laboratory will continue to monitor air.
- Under the direction of EPA's unilateral order to Norfolk Southern, additional soil sampling will take place next week in Pennsylvania. This sampling will include agricultural, residential, and state game areas.

Air Quality

Unified Command's top priority is the health and safety of the residents of Ohio and Pennsylvania whose lives have been impacted by the train derailment. The member organizations remain confident that the air quality there is safe, and that the health of residents continues to be protected. To date, 629 indoor air screenings have been conducted. Air monitoring continues 24/7 at 23 stations throughout the community. No detections of vinyl chloride or hydrogen chloride have been identified.

During the soil removal at the derailment site, EPA and contractors are conducting air monitoring within the work zone and throughout the surrounding community. This includes continuous air monitoring and sampling at the site and throughout the community. EPA's TAGA mobile laboratory is also conducting air monitoring near the soil excavation area.

Soil Removal at the Derailment Site

Work at the site includes removing tracks in sections and removing soil and placing it in a staging area for disposal. Soil removal is nearing completion at the south track rail area; planning for the north track rail removal is underway. During the soil removal process, Norfolk Southern, with EPA oversight, will conduct soil sampling beneath the excavated rail track.

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 and from cleaning and washing trucks before they leave site.

Soil Sampling

EPA has reviewed preliminary data from some of the soil sampling related to the controlled burn that occurred during response actions to the train derailment in East Palestine. While final results will be available in the coming weeks, EPA's review of the preliminary data indicates levels of semi-volatile organic chemicals and dioxins in the samples are similar to typical background levels.

EPA and Norfolk Southern contractors continue to take soil samples at agricultural, commercial, recreational, and residential properties in both Ohio and Pennsylvania. To date, 137 properties have been sampled. This soil sampling effort will help identify if contaminants, including SVOCs and dioxins, are present and may have been caused by the train derailment.

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