

Updates from East Palestine Response

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio – The northern and southern tracks through East Palestine, Ohio, are both currently operational. Response personnel and community members should be aware of increased rail activity through town until soil excavation and cleanup of the northern track begins on Thursday, April 20.

EPA Response Coordinator Mark Durno will speak at a Soil Sampling Information Session on Thursday, April 20, from 6 to 7 p.m. Topics will include who was conducting soil sampling, how sampling was done, and how to interpret results. There will be a presentation followed by a question-and-answer portion and a short demonstration. This event is hosted by The Way Station and First United Presbyterian Church at 109 W. Rebecca Street, East Palestine, Ohio.

Note: *This event is open to the media. EPA asks that media in attendance be mindful that this is a community event and community participation is encouraged.*

Response By the Numbers (as of the morning of April 18, 2023)

- **28,610 tons est. (+2,010 tons) of contaminated soil shipped**
- **12,608,106 gallons (+245,723 gallons) of liquid waste shipped to date**
- **631 indoor air screenings (+1) conducted**
- **360 private well samples (+13) conducted**
- **The Welcome Center has received 562 visitors**

What to expect this week

Both the northern and southern tracks through East Palestine are operational. Cleanup and excavation of the north track is expected to begin on Thursday, April 20.

At the derailment site:

- Contaminated soil and waste stockpiles are being covered overnight and when not in use.
- Vapor suppressants are being utilized to address odor and vapor issues associated with excavation activities.
- EPA continues to document all excavation activities including soil confirmation sampling prior to restoration.

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 continues at 23 locations around the community. Review of data supports air monitoring trends that air quality has remained below screening levels.

Air Quality

The Unified Command member organizations remain confident that the air quality is safe, and that the health of residents continues to be protected. To date, 631 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.

EPA's TAGA mobile laboratory will resume air monitoring on Thursday, April 20.

Soil Removal at the Derailment Site

Removal of contaminated soil and waste continues at the derailment site. Staging operations have begun for stockpiling of excavated soil and debris for when excavation and cleanup of the north track begins.

Norfolk Southern and EPA are conducting air monitoring within the work zone and throughout the surrounding community. Norfolk Southern is also conducting worker air monitoring.

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 also collected from cleaning and washing trucks before they leave the site.

Soil Sampling

Phase I of residential, recreational, commercial, and agricultural soil sampling from the soil sampling plan was completed on Friday, April 14.

A total of 148 soil sample sets were collected: 89 from Ohio and 54 from Pennsylvania.

Drinking and Groundwater Sampling

Ohio EPA continues to conduct drinking water testing of East Palestine municipal water wells on a weekly basis. Ohio EPA also continues to perform weekly sentinel groundwater sampling.

Water Quality Monitoring

Norfolk Southern continues surface water sampling of affected waterways daily. Cleanup of contaminated material and product recovery is being performed in Sulphur Run and Leslie Run downstream of the incident.

Cleanup operations are being done with particular care to sensitive habitats in Leslie Run to ensure the protection of those habitats during cleanup. Air monitoring is performed during these operations.

Ohio EPA continues to identify action items related to surface water containment and recovery and communicates those to Unified Command.

###