

Updates from the East Palestine Train Derailment Emergency Response

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio (November 9, 2023)

- On November 9, EPA released its [initial report](#) to the White House pursuant to Executive Order 14108, “Ensuring the People of East Palestine Are Protected Now and in the Future.” The report provides an overview of the response to date and explains the status of air, soil, surface water, groundwater, and drinking water sampling and monitoring. The agency will submit updated reports to the President every 60 days until all cleanup, assessment, and monitoring work required by EPA’s order has been completed.

EPA’s number one priority has been — and continues to be — the health and safety of the community. Since the disaster, EPA has collected more than 115 million air monitoring data points and more than 35,000 samples (air, water and soil) in and around the community. This data collection continues, and ongoing science-based reviews show that residents of East Palestine are not being exposed to from contaminated drinking water, soil, or air from the derailment.

Since February, there has been tremendous progress towards removing contamination resulting from the derailment from the community — excavating and disposing of more than 174,000 tons of contaminated soil and shipping more than 37 million gallons of wastewater off-site. The contaminated soil and gravel beneath the train tracks at the derailment location have been excavated and transported off-site for disposal. Excavation of contaminated soil from affected areas near the tracks is complete, and site-wide confirmation sampling is underway to double-check that all contamination resulting from the derailment has been removed.

- EPA’s Welcome Center will be closed for Veteran’s Day and will be open by appointment only starting Monday, November 13th. To make an appointment, please call EPA’s information line (330-775-6517). Questions may also be sent to r5_eastpalestine@epa.gov.
- The new location of the Pennsylvania Department of Health is 3582 Brodhead Road, Suite 108, Monaca and there are services that the Pennsylvania Department of Health will have available at the state health center. The state health centers are open 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- The small storage tanks off Taggart Street that have held both wastewater and treated wastewater will begin to be removed from the derailment site. This will both reduce the footprint of the response and help continue the closure of the tank farm operations.
- Norfolk Southern has started winterizing equipment at the water treatment center. More details will follow in next week’s newsletter and JIC Media Update.
- South Ditch is being backfilled with clean soil and then it will be tested again as a double check to ensure that the soil does not contain VOCs from the derailment.

- Leslie and Sulphur Runs are both being visually inspected for sheen in sediment over nearly five miles of the creeks. So far, 4,900 feet of Sulphur Run have been inspected from the confluence of Sulphur Run and Leslie Run to where Sulphur Run meets the North Ditch. The remaining sections that need to be inspected represent the upstream areas and will be completed after Leslie Run is finished. Samples of sheen and sediment may be collected based upon visual sheen inspection results.

Response by the Numbers *(as of November 8)*

- 174,838 tons (estimated) of solid waste shipped
- 37,706,684 gallons (estimated) of wastewater shipped
- 74 structures have been cleaned

What to Expect Next Week

At the derailment site:

- Tank removals that will help reduce the footprint at the derailment site
- Continued surface and at-depth soil sampling
- Continued confirmation sampling
- Continued wastewater treatment

In the greater community:

- Continued creek visual stream assessment
- Continued confirmation sampling
- Surface water sampling will continue in Leslie and Sulphur Run