

Clean-up Efforts Continue Following Train Derailment in East Palestine; Norfolk Southern Agrees to Provide Additional Financial Assistance to Residents

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) shared today that excavation work continues at the derailment site, and that, at the agency’s request, Norfolk Southern has agreed to provide additional financial assistance to residents of the East Palestine area, including the portions of Pennsylvania within a mile of the derailment site.

EPA personnel have been on the ground since the onset of the train derailment, working alongside federal, state, and local partners [with response efforts](#).

See operational updates from other federal agencies supporting this incident response below.

Operational Updates:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- Excavation work continues at the derailment site. While EPA does not anticipate exceedances of levels of health concern as a result of the excavation work, we are carefully overseeing this work to ensure residents’ safety. This includes continue round-the-clock air monitoring at the site and throughout the community as well as the use of EPA’s Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) mobile laboratory which is conducting an air monitoring route near the soil excavation area.
- At EPA’s request, Norfolk Southern has agreed to provide additional financial assistance to residents of the East Palestine area, including the portions of Pennsylvania within a mile of the derailment site. This assistance may include temporary lodging, travel, food, clothing, and other necessities. The relocation offer is completely voluntary and is being provided as an option and a resource to interested residents to ensure they feel comfortable throughout the track excavation work.
- EPA will hold a Resource Fair for residents on March 9, 2023, from 6-9 p.m. at 360 West Grant Street (East Palestine High School). This will be an opportunity for residents to talk face-to-face and ask questions to federal, state and local agency officials.
- EPA’s community welcome center at 25 North Market Street continues to be open to the community from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day.

Department of Transportation (DOT) & National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)

- DOT’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) recently urged all railroad operators to create and maintain emergency response plans for the transport of hazardous materials, strengthen the accessibility of the AskRail system, and inform PHMSA when they identify responders who are not able to access PHMSA’s grant-funded training. The full advisory can be found [here](#).
- NTSB, an independent federal agency, is leading the investigation into the cause of the derailment. NTSB recently issued an Investigative Update with factual findings on their investigation on the ground: <https://www.nts.gov/news/press-releases/Pages/NR20230214.aspx>

- Within hours of the derailment, staff from the Federal Railroad Administration and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration staff were on the scene to support the NTSB investigation.
- Upon completion of the investigation, DOT will use all relevant authorities to ensure accountability and improve safety.
- DOT is demanding immediate actions from the Class I railroads, announcing continued and expanded action from DOT, and calling on Congress to take actions that will hold the industry accountable.
- More information here: <https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/us-department-transportation-fact-sheet-steps-forward-freight-rail-industry-safety>
- USDOT's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is issuing a Safety Bulletin following a recent incident that involved a serious injury to a rail worker. The Bulletin is intended to raise increase awareness of the hazards relating to switching cars and the role that operating rules, job briefings, communications and situational awareness play in ensuring switching operations are conducted safely.

Health and Human Services (HHS) and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

- CDC/ATSDR teams are conducting Assessment of Chemical Exposure (ACE) investigation surveys in East Palestine today.
- The agency kicked off the ACE investigation for derailment first responders and began administering surveys yesterday.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

- FEMA currently has about 20 personnel deployed to support EPA and the federal response effort through operational coordination, logistical planning and unity of effort.
- Specifically, FEMA recently supported Interagency Community Outreach teams with door to door outreach in the affected area, sharing valuable information with residents and businesses.
- These teams have been engaging with affected residents in the community and more than 2,200 flyers have been handed to individuals or dropped off at their homes and businesses to date. These teams have connected with every Ohio and Pennsylvania residence and business that local leaders and state officials have requested they visit.

Norfolk Southern Corporation

- Norfolk Southern has agreed to provide additional financial assistance that may include temporary lodging, travel, food, clothing, and other necessities. This assistance will be available to residents of the East Palestine area (including the portions of Pennsylvania within a mile of the derailment site). Residents who would like to take advantage of this offer should contact the NS resource hotline at **(800) 230-7049** (24hr) or visit the **Family Assistance Center** at Abundant Life Church in New Waterford, OH.

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