

# East Palestine

## TRAIN DERAILMENT RESPONSE

Serving East Palestine, Negley, Darlington and surrounding communities

# NEWSLETTER

May 9, 2023



Handheld monitors are used to screen VOC levels in excavated areas

## PROGRESS MADE

### North Track Excavation and Sampling

As the north track excavation continues, teams sample excavated areas to make sure all contaminated material is removed. Sampling methods include using monitors to measure levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and sampling jars to collect soil for analysis. Samples are collected from the same spot for accuracy by both EPA and Norfolk Southern and are not mixed or analyzed together. EPA analyzes samples at the on-site laboratory. If a sample exceeds screening levels, teams go back to the sample area to take another and continue to take samples deeper in the ground to make sure all contamination is removed.

### Sediment Cleaning in Leslie Run

This week Norfolk Southern will be conducting cleanup activities in Leslie Run, with part of the

effort being testing the restoration methods. These restoration efforts have been designed to further stream cleanup with specific sensitivity to protecting the existing ecological community within the stream. Under expert regulatory guidance and direction from USEPA and OEPA, the activities will focus on addressing the remaining residual impacts to the sediments in the waterway to facilitate the stream and associated wildlife's return to conditions prior to the incident.

### Removal of Water Treatment Equipment from Sulphur Run

Ohio EPA and Norfolk Southern stopped treating water in Sulphur Run in April after receiving favorable water sampling data. Crews recently removed the water treatment equipment, like water pumps, air compressors, and diffusers, from the creek.



Excavated areas under the north track are sampled to ensure all contamination is removed



Waste is safely secured and loaded for off-site disposal

# THE WEEK AHEAD

## AT THE SITE

- Excavation will continue on the north track. Sampled and cleared areas will be backfilled with clean material. These areas are still subject to further sampling and evaluation.
- Three air monitoring and sampling mobile laboratories will continue driving around the perimeter of the site to monitor for very low levels of butyl acrylate.
- Expect increased traffic along East Martin Street.
- Taggart Street remains closed to the public.

## IN THE GREATER COMMUNITY

- U.S. EPA's Community Welcome Center remains open to the public at 25 North Market Street in East Palestine from Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- The Way Station will host Ohio EPA for an informational session on surface water assessments and sampling at 109 West Rebecca Street on May 11, from 6 to 7 p.m.

You may have seen more air monitoring and sampling mobile laboratories driving around the perimeter of the site. They are monitoring and sampling for very low levels of butyl acrylate. These laboratories can also come to your home to sample outdoor air if you smell an odor. Call the resident hotline, 330-849-3919, and a mobile lab and team will come sample the air outside of your home. At this time, only outdoor air monitoring and sampling will be offered, ending the indoor air screening.

# COMMUNITY CORNER

EPA loans air sensors to schools, community groups and other organizations for up to one month. These sensors measure the air for particulate matter, humidity, and temperature to help communities understand air quality and contaminant levels in indoor and outdoor air, and improve personal and public health.

To learn more, including the equipment available, training, and shipping and contact information, please visit the following link:

[epa.gov/air-sensor-toolbox/air-sensor-loan-programs#r5](https://epa.gov/air-sensor-toolbox/air-sensor-loan-programs#r5)



Liquid waste is loaded, labeled, and logged within a secondary containment area

## DID YOU KNOW?

You can take steps to improve indoor air quality and limit your exposure to pollutants. Below are three simple at-home-practices to improve indoor air quality and protect your family's health.

If you expect your home has poor indoor air quality, consider the following to reduce pollutant levels:



### VENTILATING

Increase fresh indoor air by opening windows and doors, running air conditioners (with the vent control open), turning on bathroom and kitchen

fans that exhaust outdoors, and ventilating areas near fireplaces, kitchens, and cigarette smoke.



### CHANGING AIR FILTERS REGULARLY

Replace central heat, air conditioner, and furnace filters to better trap dust and pollutants, and install filters according to the manufacturers' instructions.



### DUST CONTROL

Minimize dust by wiping surfaces and washing fabrics and children's toys regularly.



## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

The Way Station and First United Presbyterian Church hosted an informational session on May 4 to discuss private well water sampling. At this meeting, the Columbiana County Health District presented information about how well sampling is done, how to interpret sampling results, and how to know if contamination from the derailment could affect drinking water. A recording of the presentation will be available on EPA's East Palestine website.



(866) 361-0526



R5\_eastpalestine@epa.gov



[epa.gov/east-palestine-oh-train-derailment](https://epa.gov/east-palestine-oh-train-derailment)

# TOP 3 QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK

These questions are in response to resident concerns about vinyl chloride.

## 01 Should I get tested?

We have heard residents' concerns about potential exposure to vinyl chloride. EPA air monitoring data results show vinyl chloride below levels of health concerns. Available biological tests do not accurately assess exposure to vinyl chloride at levels present from this incident.

## 02 If I get a urine test, what does that indicate?

If I get a urine test, what does that indicate? Urine tests show the level of thiodiglycolic acid—a break-down product of vinyl chloride. A complete lab report will show your thiodiglycolic acid results compared to the normal range commonly found in people in the United States. But this test does not reliably indicate exposure to vinyl chloride. There are several other sources of thiodiglycolic acid in urine, including some chemicals, foods, and medications. Health specialists do not know what level of thiodiglycolic acid may be related to what types of health effects. In addition, there is no recommended medical treatment for people with elevated levels of thiodiglycolic acid.

## 03 What else can cause urine to test positive for thiodiglycolic acid?

Thiodiglycolic acid is commonly found in general populations who have not been exposed to vinyl chloride. Some sources can include:

- Certain foods including raw onions, meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Some medications, including Zyrtec, and vitamins.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Smoke including from wood fireplaces, cooking, and cigarettes.
- Some household products including paints and varnishes.
- Chemicals used in the workplace.

## BY THE NUMBERS

As of May 5

# 37,385

ESTIMATED TONS OF SOLID WASTE SHIPPED OFFSITE

# 14.8 million

EST. GALLONS OF WASTEWATER SHIPPED OFFSITE

# 509

PRIVATE WELL SAMPLES COLLECTED

# 147

AREAS SAMPLED FOR SOIL ANALYSIS

# 735

VISITORS TO THE WELCOME CENTER

## COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST

### HEALTH RESOURCES

#### Pennsylvania Residents:

Call the Department of Health Hotline (877-PA-HEALTH) to connect with a nurse to find appropriate local health care services.

#### Ohio Residents:

The East Palestine Clinic is located at 139 North Walnut, East Palestine, Ohio

The clinic will operate:

- Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. by appointment only
- Free for those without insurance coverage
- Available to any residents with concerns
- The clinic is providing comprehensive primary care (treatment, prescriptions, lab testing, consultation with specialists and referrals if needed). It's staffed by physicians, registered nurses and mental health specialists
- Call 330-383-6020 to make an appointment

#### Ohio and Pennsylvania Residents:

East Palestine Resident Specific Poison Control Incident Hotline: 1-877-603-0170, PA residents can press 2

### ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

#### Pennsylvania Residents:

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

- Southwest Regional Office water testing line: 412-442-4000

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

- Pennsylvania farmers and producers who are affected by the derailment and have questions or concerns can call 855-777-6735

#### Ohio Residents:

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

- For public drinking water quality and surface water results: 614-644-2160

Ohio Department of Agriculture

- For questions about livestock and pet health: 614-728-6220



(866) 361-0526



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epa.gov/east-palestine-oh-train-derailment

## KEY COMMUNITY EVENTS THIS WEEK

On May 11, The Way Station and First United Presbyterian Church will host an informational session with Ohio EPA about surface water, including creeks and municipal water, assessments, and sampling. The session will be from 6 to 7 p.m. at the First United Presbyterian Church at 109 West Rebecca Street in East Palestine.

Please contact EPA's Information Line at 866-361-0526 if you have any questions.

## ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This weekly newsletter is being developed through a joint effort of local, state, federal agencies, and community organizations. If you would like more information about topics discussed, please visit [www.epa.gov/east-palestine-oh-train-derailment](http://www.epa.gov/east-palestine-oh-train-derailment) or call EPA's Information Line at **866-361-0526**



**SCAN ME** for a list of additional resources

EPA Welcome Center - EPTD  
25 N. Market St  
East Palestine, OH 44413