

From: Martin Akel <akelassoc@earthlink.net>
To: "p66-railspur-comments@co.slo.ca.us"
<p66-railspur-comments@co.slo.ca.us>
Date: 11/19/2014 10:08 AM
Subject: Comment On The Hazards Of The P66 Rail Terminal Project

Mr. Wilson:

If the REIR is to fully communicate the potential impact the Rail Terminal project would have on SLO County, it must specifically identify the main areas in SLO County put at risk. The REIR fails to identify those locations. In fact, those locations encompass the vast majority of SLO County.

The REIR should clearly state that each of the trains entering SLO County from the north would put at risk each of the locations below. (Of course, as the trains leave the County, the locations would be exposed a second time.)

- From the north, the trains would pass directly through downtown San Miguel (population 2,300).
- North of Paso Robles they'd pass by vineyards such as Echelon Vineyards, San Marcos Creek Vineyards, and Ada's Vineyard. They would also pass by the Vines RV Resort by about 500 feet.
- In Paso Robles (population 30,000), they'd head past the Fairgrounds by about 500 feet, where the Mid-County Fair is held, and also right by the Travelodge, Best Western, Holiday Inn and Motel 6.
- In downtown Paso, the tank cars would pass City Park on the east side by about 500 feet.
- A bit south they'd pass right next to the Firestone Walker Brewery.
- In Templeton (population 7,600), they'd go past Templeton Park by about 1,000 feet.
- Then they'd make their way down along the east side of the city of Atascadero (population, 28,000).
- Next they'd go through downtown Santa Margarita (population 1,300), about 500 feet from the elementary school.
- They'd hug the 101 for many miles, then curve back and forth down the long, serpentine Cuesta Grade.
- Next, the 18,000 Cal Poly students would be able to wave to the tank cars, as it winds through their campus.
- In the city of SLO (population 45,000), the tankers would ride adjacent to Pepper St., 2,000 feet from City Hall, and even closer to the Government Center building.
- They'd then pass within literal shouting distance of French Hospital.
- Heading out of downtown, they'd pass approximately 3,000 feet east of SLO's regional airport.

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- They'd pass through the backyard of the Los Ranchos Elementary School.
- As they begin to enter Pismo Beach (population 7,700), trains would mirror Price Canyon Road.
- They'd then cross Highway 101 at 5 Cities Drive, about 750 feet west of the Premium Outlets, and about 2,000 feet from the Pismo Coast Shopping Plaza.
- They'd pass around 1,400 feet to the east of Rosa's Italian restaurant (and other eateries) on Price St. in downtown Pismo.
- They would then parallel Highway 1, passing by the North Beach Campground, by about 1,000 feet.
- They'd also pass about 100 feet from the entrance to the Monarch Butterfly Grove in Pismo.
- In Grover Beach (population 13,000), they'd cross the busy intersection at Grand Avenue, just down the street from where tourists and locals take their vehicles onto the beach ... and near the new lodge and conference center that will be built there.
- In Oceano (population 7,200), they'd go right past Pier Avenue, another beach entrance for tourists and locals, and then pass right by the entrance to the Great American Melodrama theater.
- They'd then wind their way south through agricultural fields. They'd rejoin Highway 1, coming as close as about 100 feet to the west. At that point they'd be in Arroyo Grande (population 17,000). And they'd pass Lopez High School by about 1,300 feet.
- Their journey through SLO County would then end, at the new rail terminal in the Santa Maria Refinery on the Nipomo Mesa.
- That proposed terminal is also directly across Highway 1 from the communities of Trilogy, Black Lake and others that are now in the planning in Nipomo (population 16,000).
- Of course, once each of the 1.5 mile-long tanker trains unloads, it would head back north again, following the exact same route.

How can a document that purports to report on the "hazards" to SLO County, fail to list the specific areas that will be put in danger? This must be corrected in the next EIR.

Sincerely,
Martin Akel

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From: Martin Akel <akelassoc@earthlink.net>
To: p66-railspur-comments@co.slo.ca.us
Date: 10/28/2014 07:58 AM
Subject: The Historical Odds Of Rail Accidents Are Misleading For SLO
County

Dear Mr. Murry:

The recent REIR appears to attempt to calm citizens regarding the potential for train accidents based on the Phillips 66 Rail Terminal project. For example (ES-11) - it states that the potential "for a release of 100 gallons or more of oil from a train between the SMR and the Roseville or Colton rail yards was estimated to be between one every 46 years to once every 76 years."

Well, I'm sure that the REIR is based on historical statistics -- but the historical odds of rail accidents versus what is actually occurring needs to be totally reexamined by SLO County.

Today, railroads and oil companies are shipping exponentially larger amounts of crude oil by rail. And they're attempting to assuage citizens' fears about rail accidents by citing outdated, historical statistics. For example ...

- The Association of American Railroads proudly notes that in the past, 99.9% of rail shipments of hazardous materials, including oil, reached their destination without a spill.
- And the fall 2013 Draft EIR for the Phillips Rail Project placed the likelihood of a train accident releasing oil in SLO county at once in every 226 years.

Unfortunately, current data is far more sobering. Looking strictly at oil shipments, spills are spiking. According to an Associated Press analysis (see all footnotes below) -- in 2009, before the oil drilling boom, just one rail oil spill was reported. But now, with the flood of new oil, the landscape is far different. Through November 2013, crude oil releases were reported from 137 rail cars versus just one car.

Let's look at another current statistic. In the last five years, the number of tankers of crude transported by train in the U.S. has grown from under 10,000 to about 400,000 -- that's a 40-fold increase.

And over the next decade, rail oil shipments are forecast to increase from 1 million barrels each day to more than 4.5 million barrels every single day.

Therefore, you can toss the industry's outdated "odds" out the window. All you need do is look out the window to learn the facts. Freight trains carrying crude oil, propane and other hazardous materials are

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going off their tracks at alarming rates. Why? Because more trains are carrying that material. The roll call of such events, just since 2013, is overwhelming in its quantity and intensity ...

- March 2013, Parkers Prairie, Minnesota: Fourteen cars on a mile-long train carrying tar sands derailed, leaking 26,000 gallons of crude. A former chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board (Jim Hall) said - "It's good business for the rails and bad safety for the public."
- July, Lac-Megantic, Canada: A 72-car train carrying Bakken crude crashed and exploded, killing 47 people and flattening the center of their town.
- October, Gainford, Alberta, Canada: Thirteen cars, carrying crude oil and liquified petroleum gas, came off the tracks, with many cars leaking, exploding or bursting into massive flames. Local officials declared a state of emergency and the entire community was evacuated.
- November, Aliceville, Alabama: Twenty cars on a train carrying light Bakken crude derailed, spilling 750,000 gallons. Twelve cars exploded, going up in flame. The leaking oil fouled nearby wetlands.
- December, Casselton, North Dakota: A freight train traveling below the speed limit derailed and crashed into a crude oil train. Eighteen tank cars exploded with a frightening, towering mushroom-cloud. Toxic fumes were released, causing all 2,300 residents to evacuate. 400,000 gallons of crude oil spilled out of the tank cars.
- January 2014, New Brunswick, Canada: A train derailed ... with five cars containing crude oil overturning, as well as four cars with liquified petroleum gas.
- January, Plaster Rock, New Brunswick, Canada: Later the same month in New Brunswick (just east of Maine in the U.S.), another freight train derailed, including 8 cars containing propane gas and crude oil. A fire ignited and local residents were evacuated.
- January, Vancouver, Canada: Seven cars carrying coal and coal dust went off the rails, spilling into a protected salmon stream.
- January, Caledonia, WI: A Union Pacific train carrying coal derailed, sending 19 cars off the tracks.
- January, Florida's Panhandle: A train derailed spilling 30,000 gallons of corrosive, phosphoric acid. The acid had to be removed from a local stream and river.
- January, Philadelphia, PA: A train carrying six cars of crude oil derailed on a narrow bridge, leaving a tanker car and a boxcar dangling dangerously off the tracks, over a highway and river.
- January, New Augusta, Miss: Eighteen tank cars carrying highly flammable ethanol derailed, spilling fuel from the train. Citizens were evacuated to Red Cross shelters, and the local highway shut down.

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- February, Vandergrift, PA: Nineteen cars carrying heavy crude derailed outside Pittsburgh, with four cars leaking approximately 4,000 gallons of oil. Two other cars carrying propane also derailed. One of the cars went through the wall of a nearby building.
- March, Albany, NY: Thirteen tank cars carrying crude oil went off the tracks in a local rail yard.
- March, Western Minnesota: Fourteen cars on a mile-long train from Canada derailed and leaked between 20 and 30 thousand gallons of crude oil.*****
- March: The Federal Railroad Administration estimated that “human factors“ contribute to nearly 40% of all train crashes, and that fatigue plays a role in roughly a quarter of them.*****
- March: Canada’s Transportation Safety Board released its report on 2013 rail accidents. In 2013, 144 rail accidents involved dangerous goods, a 21% increase over 2012. That was up from the five-year average of 133. Seven accidents resulted in the release of dangerous goods with five of them (71%) involving petroleum crude oil. They reported that this increase is concurrent with an increase in shipments of crude oil by rail in Canada, from 500 car loads in 2009 to 160,000 car loads in 2013.*****

And since last March, dozens more train accidents have occurred involving crude oil or other hazardous materials (as documented in the Mesa Refinery Watch Group newsletters).

We should all admit, that with a documented history like that, the odds of future derailments are extremely high. The roll call of rail accidents will grow longer and longer.

And speaking of oil spills -- more crude spilled from train accidents in 2013 than in the previous four decades combined. From 1975 to 2012, a 38-year period, only 800,000 gallons of crude spilled from rail accidents combined. This pales in comparison to the damage done in 2013 alone, in which 1.2 million gallons of crude were spilled.***

The reality of what’s actually happening and will continue to happen, flies in the face of the outdated, 99% odds and statistics handed out by railroads and oil companies. Simply put -- regardless of improvements in tank cars, far more crude oil shipped by rail equals far more trains derailing and far more disasters. It’s all in the new numbers.

This was stated in a more colorful way by transportation consultant Steven Ditmeyer, a professor at Michigan State University. He said that it’s in the industry’s best interests to run safe railroads. But then he pointed to the Canadian Lac-Mégantic disaster that killed 47 people. Regarding the railroads, he summed it all up with - “sometimes they screw up.”*****

Please -- this core concept about rail accidents must be reexamined by SLO County, not by Phillip 66's

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consultants. And our Planning Commission and Supervisors must vote "No Project."

Sincerely,
Martin Akel

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<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2014/jan/19/oil-by-rail-area-leaders-prep-for-disaster-while/>

** http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_289563/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Yhrk2lho

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<http://blogs.wsj.com/canadarealtime/2014/03/26/tsb-data-show-increase-in-rail-accidents-involving-dangerous-goods-last-year/>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/28/minnesota-oil-spill_n_2967118.html

<http://usnews.nbcnews.com/news/2014/01/31/22524183-50-evacuated-after-chemical-train-derailment-in-mississippi>

<http://bangordailynews.com/2014/01/07/news/world-news/evacuation-ordered-as-train-derails-catches-fire-in-new-brunswick/>

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/fiery-tanker-train-derailment-in-canada/>

<http://usnews.nbcnews.com/news/2013/03/28/17501526-train-hauling-oil-derails-spilling-30000-gallons-of-crude-in-minnesota?lite>

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THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

January 19, 2014

Oil by rail: Area leaders prep for disaster while calling for tougher standards

Scott Maben And Becky Kramer
The Spokesman-Review

Tags: Bakken BNSF Crude oil oil Oil trains rail accidents railroads rail safety



Workers comb through debris on July 9, 2013, three days after an unattended train with 72 cars carrying crude oil rolled away and derailed in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, setting the downtown ablaze and killing 47.

Also today

The potential for spills into lakes and rivers is an emerging issue for the Department of Ecology.

<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2014/jan/19/state-agency-hopes-to-finance-oil-spill-risk/>

(<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2014/jan/19/state-agency-hopes-to-finance-oil-spill-risk/>)

A string of train accidents involving crude oil shipments in the U.S. and Canada is causing uneasiness in Spokane and other communities bisected by railways. And the safety of rail cars and hazardous cargo is under intensifying scrutiny.

With the number of oil trains from the upper Great Plains expected to increase through the Spokane area, the risk of spills and potentially deadly fires is a growing concern, City Council President Ben Stuckart said.

“These are almost moving bombs,” Stuckart said.

“They’re carrying highly explosive material.”

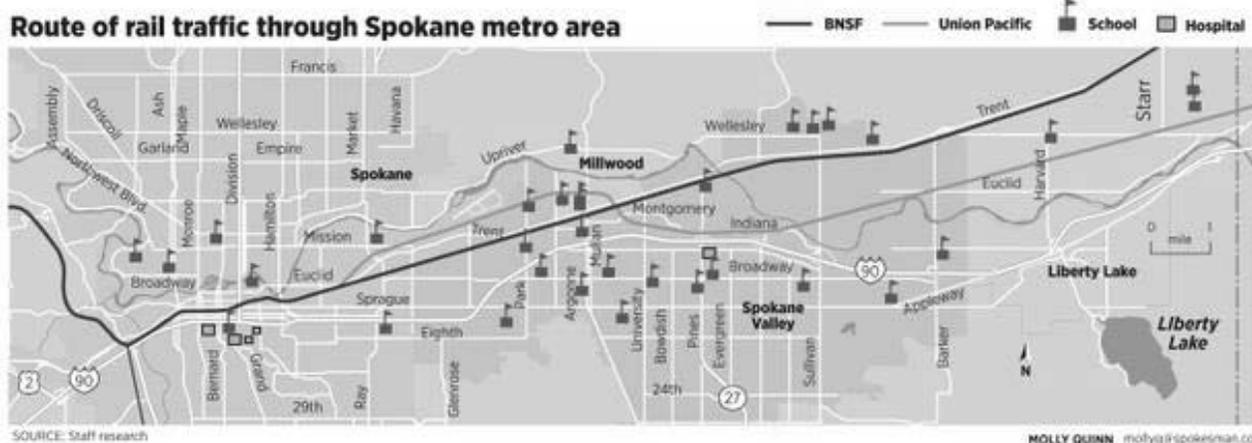
Spokane is a pinch point for rail traffic through the region. The tracks for BNSF Railway Co., a major oil hauler, cross the Spokane River, pass near schools and cut through downtown beside retail centers, office hospitals and Interstate 90.

At least one fully loaded oil train – which can stretch as long as 130 cars – snakes through Spokane each day.

But with West Side refineries and terminals ramping up to receive more of the black bounty, these shipments could become far more frequent.

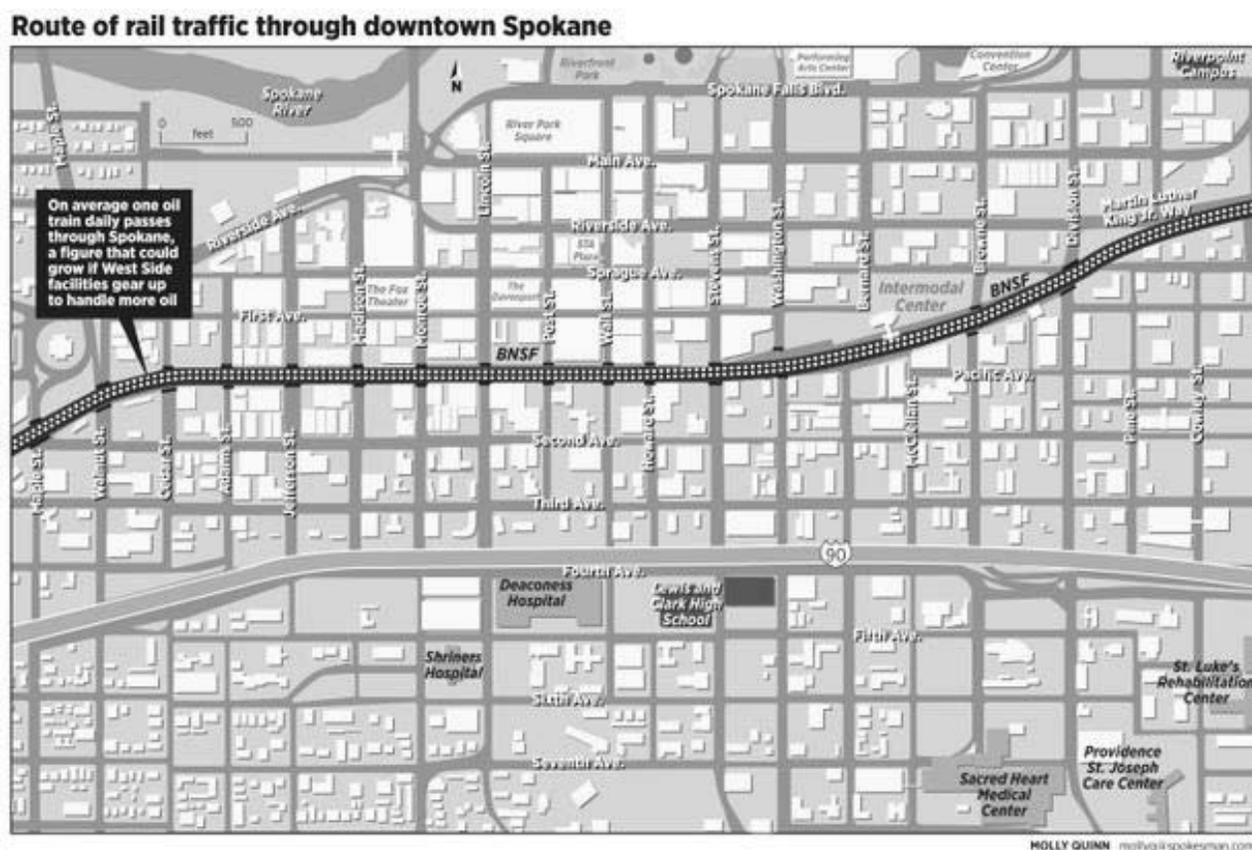
Federal officials recently warned that oil from the booming Bakken shale field in North Dakota and Montana is more flammable than previously known, raising the anxiety level.

Stuckart wants city leaders to support tougher federal safety standards for moving crude



rail, including the use of new tank cars that can better survive derailments and lower train speeds in metro areas.

In the city’s downtown core, freight train speeds drop to as low as 10 to 25 mph, according to BNSF Railway Co.



Local residents have been focused on harmful dust blowing off coal trains from Wyoming and Montana, but oil by rail is a greater worry, Stuckart said. “I find that this has now become a bigger issue if we look at the potential harm in a derailment accident,” he said.

As many as 22 full and empty oil trains a day could soon traverse Northwest railways, according to a recent market analysis by Sightline Institute, a nonprofit think tank in Seattle. That's based on 100-car trains with each car holding 700 barrels of crude.

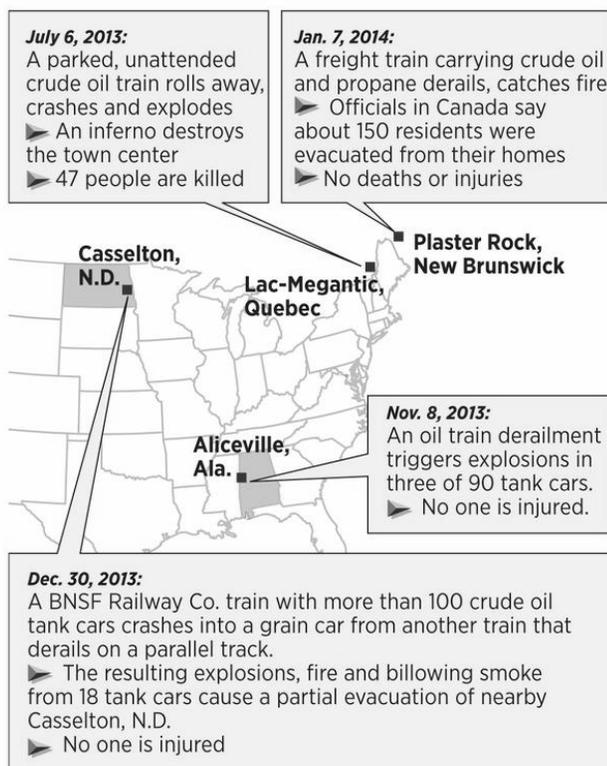
Major spills and fires are rare on North American rail lines, and the industry says it's pumping billions of dollars into upgrades and safety improvements.

"We invest in training, technology, track improvements, equipment – all of this leads to a safe railroad," said Gus Melonas, a BNSF spokesman in Seattle. "One incident is too many, and we learn from all of these that occurred. ... Our goal is not to have any incidents."

Four oil-related rail accidents since last summer – two in the past three weeks – have renewed calls for safety improvements. Railroad and oil industry executives said Thursday they'd take steps to reduce accidents, including analyzing the risks of oil trains and maybe slowing down the trains in populated areas.

Major rail accidents

Four disasters involving oil trains over the past six months highlight the risks of shipping crude by rail.



SOURCES: Federal Railroad Administration; Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration; McClatchy-Tribune

Staff and wire graphic

On Dec. 30, a BNSF train carrying crude oil crashed into a derailed train in North Dakota, triggering explosions and a fire that prompted about 1,400 residents to flee a nearby town. Eight days later, a train loaded with crude oil and propane derailed in Canada's New Brunswick province, leading to another evacuation.

What truly rattled rail towns across the continent was the crash and horrific explosion last July that killed 47 people and destroyed 30 buildings in the center of Lac-Megantic, Quebec.

"I don't think it's being hyperbolic or fear-mongering to say we should be really worried about that," said Eric de Place, policy director at Sightline. "I think the potential loss of life is so staggering that we need to be

extremely concerned."

A pipeline on rails

America's oil rush has fueled the spike in crude moving by rail. Drilling sites dotting the vast Bakken formation sprang up faster than new pipelines could keep pace in recent years, and a million barrels a day is being pulled from the ground there. The industry turned to railroads to move oil to coastal refineries and port terminals.

In 2010, trains hauled just 6 percent of the production in the Williston Basin. By mid-2013, railroads moved 68 percent of the oil.

BNSF said it hauls more than 600,000 barrels of crude a day across its network. That includes, on average, one train a day through Spokane.

That number easily could rise as refineries and transfer terminals in Puget Sound and along the lower Columbia prepare to take more Bakken crude. Three Washington refineries bring it in now and two more want to start. Also, a terminal in Clatskanie, Ore., receives and ships the oil, and five more terminals in Washington hope to follow suit.

If approved by state regulators, the largest rail-oil terminal in the Northwest could open later this year at the Port of Vancouver. Tesoro Corp. and Savage Cos. envision a complex that could handle as much as 360,000 barrels of oil a day, pulling crude off trains and loading it onto ships for delivery to U.S. refineries.

As the leading crude oil rail carrier in the Northwest, BNSF anticipates it would haul oil to the new Vancouver terminal.

About 30,000 people submitted comments on the Vancouver project. Many urged the state to require an analysis of potential impacts along the route, including the possibility of a derailment and explosion in a densely populated area such as Spokane and oil spills along the Columbia River.

BNSF officials want a more limited scope for the Tesoro-Savage project analysis. The rail lines that will serve the project already exist, and the potential risks from being near an active rail line are already present and known, wrote Skip Kalb, BNSF's director of strategic development.

But Stuckart believes Spokane has much at stake from oil by rail, including the lives of thousands who live, work and attend school near rail lines, and the protection of drinking water and air quality in the area. He wants the City Council to have a voice in state

approval of new refineries and terminals and also push for stronger federal rail safety regulations.

“I’m not anti-train,” Stuckart said, “but these are huge public safety issues and they have to be addressed.”

He plans to bring a resolution before the City Council next week to highlight his concerns, including a request to include Spokane in all environmental reviews of projects that increase oil trains through town.

Planning for disaster

An oil train accident here could put tens of thousands of people in harm’s way, trigger a large-scale evacuation and spread toxic smoke and black soot through neighborhoods.

Such a calamity is factored into emergency plans for Spokane County and its cities. “All we can try to do is be best prepared to handle it when it does occur,” Spokane Fire Chief Bobby Williams said.

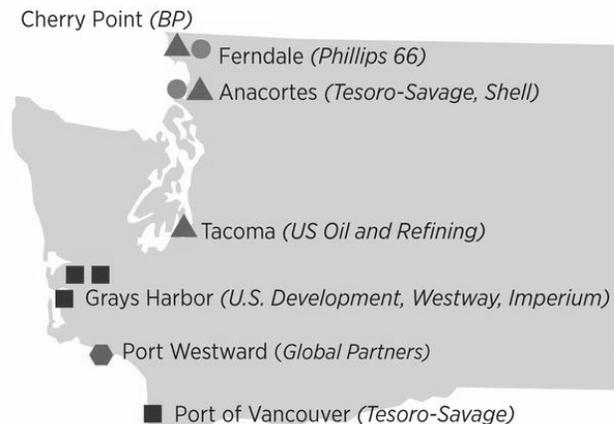
Hazmat teams based in Spokane and Coeur d’Alene and at Fairchild Air Force Base stand at the ready, and officials can summon help from other fire departments and tap federal resources in a major emergency. In addition, BNSF has held training sessions for first responders.

Trains must carry an inventory of cargo, and each car must be labeled with its contents. That accounting helps first responders know what they’re dealing with at an accident scene.

Still, there is little firefighters can do to extinguish large oil blazes, which can burn for days and force people to flee thick plumes of noxious smoke.

Gearing up for oil

In 2012, the first rail shipment of North Dakota crude arrived at a Puget Sound refinery. Now, eight rail terminals that would handle crude from the Bakken deposit are in the works or in proposal stage in Washington.



	Handling capacity (barrels per day)
Terminals already receiving and shipping	
● Port Westward (Global Partners)	28,600
Planning to ship and receive:	
■ Port of Vancouver (Tesoro-Savage)	360,000
■ Grays Harbor (U.S. Development)	50,000
■ Grays Harbor (Imperium)	70,000
■ Grays Harbor (Westway)	26,300
Refineries already receiving	
▲ Anacortes (Tesoro-Savage)	50,000
▲ Cherry Point (BP)	70,000
▲ Tacoma (US Oil and Refining)	35,000
Refineries planning to receive oil:	
● Ferndale (Phillips 66)	35,000
● Anacortes (Shell)	60,000
TOTAL	784,900

SOURCE: Sightline Institute

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“If it’s more safe to let it burn, you may just let it burn,” Williams said.

He also said local hazmat teams may need to adjust their response plans in reaction to the revelations about the volatility of Bakken crude.

“Do the perimeters need to be larger?” Williams said. “Is there a certain type of foam that may be more effective? Are there treatments that may be different for exposure to the product?”

The proximity to rail lines is significant for community institutions that maintain evacuation plans for any emergency.

The Spokane Community College campus is bordered on the south by the Union Pacific rail line and sits about half a mile north of BNSF’s tracks.

“One of those things that we’ve anticipated is what would happen with a chemical spill there on the tracks or a wreck,” said Greg Stevens, the chief administration officer for Community Colleges of Spokane.

In a worst-case scenario, the college would need to move about 7,000 students and 1,000 faculty members, clearing buildings with the aid of text messages and email alerts.

Spokane’s medical hub also is near the railroad. Deaconess Hospital sits three blocks south of the elevated BNSF tracks. The hospital has drawn up plans for evacuating patients and employees in a catastrophe and conducts disaster drills annually, said Sasha Weiler, spokeswoman for Deaconess and Valley hospitals.

“We certainly look at lots of scenarios. We play out scenarios like big chemical spills and fires,” Weiler said.

Reducing the risk

Downtown Spokane has not had a major rail incident in more than two decades.

Early on Christmas Eve 1991, two rail cars plummeted 80 feet onto Interstate 90 when a freight train derailed on the Latah Creek Bridge in west Spokane. The Burlington Northern train contained no hazardous materials and no one was hurt, though a Greyhound bus on the freeway nearly was hit by the falling cars.

On April 22, 1994, poisonous fumes from a tank car on an idling train forced at least 500 people to evacuate an eight-block section of downtown. The tanker contained 141,000 pounds of ammonium sulfide, an ingredient in making fertilizer. A pressure-relief valve had opened after the liquid chemical warmed, expanded and increased pressure in the tank, officials said.

Both incidents helped emergency agencies hone their response methods, Williams said. He also thinks Spokane is well-prepared for disaster because of a series of crises in recent decades, including Fire Storm in October 1991, the Fairchild base mass shooting in June 1994, Ice Storm in November 1996 and the massive Whitley Fuel fire in July 2007.

The Association of American Railroads proudly notes that 99.998 percent of rail shipments of hazardous materials, including oil, reach their destination without a spill.

Looking strictly at oil shipments, however, spills are spiking. Through November 2013, crude oil releases were reported from 137 rail cars, according to an Associated Press analysis of federal incident reports. In 2009, before the drilling boom was underway, just one such release was reported.

BNSF works to reduce the likelihood of hazmat incidents but also helps communities prepare to respond if one does occur, Melonas said.

The railroad held free hazmat training for first responders at its Parkwater fueling and switching yard on East Trent Avenue in July 2012 and another for Medical Lake and Kootenai County crews last August. It's arranging another training session with Spokane County Fire District 9 to include local and regional fire units, Melonas said.

The railroad also has spent more than \$225 million on track improvements in Washington over the past two years, including \$30 million in the Spokane corridor, he said. The work includes new rails and ties to prevent derailments.

The carrier also has staged special equipment and hazmat responders across its network, including in Spokane and Pasco, to deal with spills or fires involving crude oil and other substances, he said. Around its network, the railroad maintains a fleet of industrial firefighting foam trailers on hazmat routes.

In the region that stretches from the Great Lakes to the Northwest coast, no one has died from a hazardous materials release on the BNSF network since an employee was killed at the railroad's Vancouver terminal in 1981, Melonas said.

Safety questions

Because railroads are federally regulated, local communities are limited in their ability to influence safety.

Still, resolutions and letters to federal regulators and Congress can make a difference, Stuckart believes.

“We’re the second-largest city in the state,” he said. “They’re listening and hearing us.”

Much of the focus is on the aging tank car fleet. About 85 percent of the cars that carry oil and other flammable liquids were built under old safety standards, and the cars are prone to split open in accidents, as happened last month outside Fargo.

The railroad industry favors better designs for rail cars, which are owned by shipping customers. The Association of American Railroads, a trade group that includes BNSF, said all tank cars used to transport crude oil, ethanol and flammable liquids should be retrofitted or phased out and new cars built to more stringent standards.

Tank cars ordered after October 2011 require thicker, more puncture-resistant steel shells, rollover protection and enhanced heat shields at both ends. Even these newer tank cars would require some modifications under proposed new federal guidelines.

The oil industry resists the changes, which would cost an estimated \$1 billion.

Some Washington refineries taking Bakken crude by rail already are using newer tank cars, including ones in Tacoma, Anacortes and Cherry Point just south of the Canadian border.

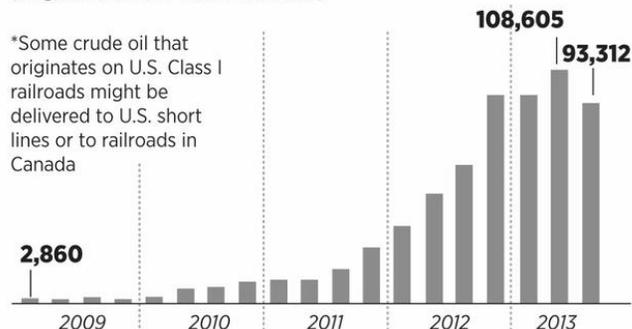
Containers aren’t the only concern. What’s in the tank cars is getting a closer look as well.

The North Dakota fire prompted the Transportation Department to issue a safety alert saying high-grade Bakken crude may be more likely to ignite at lower temperatures than other crude.

Oil shipped by rail

Carloads of crude oil

(Originated on U.S. Class I railroads*)



NOTE: Figures are quarterly totals

SOURCE: Association of American Railroads

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Oil industry executives objected to the government's safety alert and said the real issue is train collisions, defective tracks and other railroad operations.

In Spokane, officials will closely follow how the railroads, oil industry and regulators hash out safer ways to move oil from the heartland to the coasts.

"Most of that is going to have to be done at the federal level," Williams said. "And it's going to take time."

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More Crude Spilled In 2013 Than Previous Four Decades Combined

Posted By [Jacob Chamberlain](#) On January 22, 2014 @ 10:04 am In [Daily Digest,Front Page: Health & Lifestyle,Health & Lifestyle](#) | [No Comments](#)



In this photo released by the Alabama Emergency Management Agency on Friday, Nov. 8, 2013, a tanker train carrying crude oil burns after derailling in western Alabama outside Aliceville, Ala., early Friday, sending flames and black smoke into the air and temporarily forcing one family to leave their home. (AP Photo/Alabama Emergency Management Agency)

More crude oil spilled from train accidents in 2013 alone than in the previous four decades combined—an alarming number [reported by McClatchy News on Monday](#) that points towards a drastic shift in the highly toxic, yet growing, crude oil business to rail transport.

According to data from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, in the four decades that such records have been taken between 1975 to 2012, U.S. rail spilled a combined 800,000 gallons of crude oil. This pales in comparison to the damage done in the 12 months of 2013, in which 1.15 million gallons of crude oil was spilled.

In total, U.S. railroads shipped 400,000 carloads of crude oil in 2013, or over 11.5 billion gallons.

“The spike underscores new concerns about the safety of such shipments as rail has become the preferred mode for oil producers amid a North American energy boom,” *McClatchy* reports.

The report does not include, however, derailments in Canada of trains that originated in from the Bakken shale fields of North Dakota, such as [one incident in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec](#), on July 6, when a runaway train derailed and exploded, killing 47 people and spilling more than 1.5 million gallons of crude oil alone.

Also not included in the report [is a derailment near Casselton, N.D.](#) on Dec. 30 in which an estimated 400,000 gallons of crude oil were spilled and the town of Casselton was forced to evacuate.

In lieu of a recent series of these explosive train derailments originating from the Bakken shale fields, the federal government [issued a warning this month](#) saying that Bakken crude is “more

flammable than traditional heavy crude oil.”

In the latest in the series of crude derailments, on Monday [a freight train carrying crude oil derailed](#) on a bridge in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. No leaks or injuries were reported in the derailment, which occurred near the Schuylkill River.

This article originally appeared in [GlobalPost](#).

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Blue Line crash update: Brakes engaged, train wasn't speeding

March 25, 2014 | By Richard Wronski and Juan Perez Jr | Tribune reporters

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A team of federal safety experts investigating the CTA Blue Line train crash has focused on the operator's physical condition and whether she was fatigued when the train struck a barrier and went airborne, an official said Tuesday.

Questions have been raised about whether the operator was sufficiently rested when her shift began around 8 p.m.

Sunday, and about her level of awareness more than six hours later when the train plowed into the station and landed atop an escalator at O'Hare International Airport.



(http://www.trbimg.com/img-5331b517/turbine/chi-derail25ntsb-NTSB Investigator-in-Charge Ted Turpin updates reporters at the ... 20140225/2018/2018x1265)

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“We always take into consideration the fatigue factor,” said Ted Turpin, the lead investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board. “That’s one of the areas we investigate.”

The effects of fatigue on train operators has been a well-documented factor in train accidents. The Federal Railroad Administration has estimated that “human factors“ contribute to nearly 40 percent of train crashes and that fatigue played a role in roughly a quarter of them.

The Dec. 1, 2013 Metro-North commuter railroad derailment in New York City in which four people were killed has drawn nationwide attention and its own federal investigation. The lawyer and union representing the engineer have reportedly said he admitted to “nodding off.”

In Monday’s crash, the train operator, a one-year CTA employee, was “extremely tired,” and there were indications she might have dozed off at the controls, according to the transit workers union president.

The NTSB provided no comment on a scheduled Tuesday-afternoon interview between the operator and investigators. The CTA has not identified her, nor would the agency answer questions about her shift and hours.

Union President Robert Kelly has said the operator “works a lot of overtime,” but had been off for about 17 hours before starting her overnight shift.

Experts have acknowledged the potentially dangerous combination of late shifts and sleep-deprived operators.

“The human machine...is not designed to work around the clock,” said William Sirois, chief operating officer of Circadian Technologies Inc., a research and consulting firm in Stoneham, Mass., specializing in shift work and extended-hours operations.

Major physiological changes occur at night. Blood pressure and body temperatures drop. Hormonal secretions change. Such biological traits increase risk, Sirois said, estimating the chances of having an accident or incident between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. increases up to fifteen-fold.

“By every measure, human performance decreases in the nighttime hours,” Sirois said.

Fatigue, according to a 2013 railroad administration report, is viewed as largely a function of sleep and human circadian rhythms – the brain-powered process that helps dictate human sleepiness and alertness on a roughly 24-hour cycle.

But fatigue exposure is determined largely by work schedules and contributes to the probability of “human factor accidents,” the federal railroad report said. The risk of human factor accidents are elevated by 11 to 65 percent above chance by fatigue exposure, the report said.

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Brain signals that dictate human alertness levels peak during daylight hours for regular shift workers, said Dr. Phyllis Zee, associate director of the Center for Sleep & Circadian Biology at Northwestern University. Those signals tend to reach their lowest point around 3 a.m. to 5 a.m., Zee said, though humans can adjust their rhythm's timing with practice.

Certain shifts in federal regulation and private industry practice have begun to address fatigue management. The NTSB, for example, has issued a host of safety recommendations intended to address fatigue-related incidents in the country's skies, roads and railways.

Overall, the NTSB says employers should establish science-based management systems to identify factors that cause fatigue and detect its presence before problems occur.

In 2006, the NTSB recommended the Federal Transit Administration require transit agencies to ensure train operators' time off between daily shifts — including regular and overtime assignments — allowed for at least eight hours of uninterrupted sleep.

Mass transit agencies need to “continually improve” their understanding of the role of human error in accidents, the agency said in a 2014 publication. That knowledge, it said, should be used to strengthen practices, including fatigue management systems.

Despite such policy concerns, poor rest still contributes to accidents. “It’s happening, but unfortunately we’ve still got tired people at the controls,” Sirois said.

Meanwhile, other investigators at O’Hare focused on additional areas Tuesday, including the condition and maintenance of the tracks; the train cars and their mechanical condition; signals and switches; and other CTA personnel, Turpin said.

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Blue Line crash update: Brakes engaged, train wasn't speeding

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The investigators determined that the train's emergency braking system was engaged, but the train apparently wasn't speeding as it approached the station, Turpin said. As the train approached the O'Hare station at about 2:50 a.m., it was traveling about 25 or 26 mph on the middle of three tracks, he said.

A safety device on the tracks triggered the train's emergency braking system, but it wasn't clear yet why the train did not stop in time, Turpin said.

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"Whether it stopped in time or not, that's an analysis we have to figure out," he said.

The eight-car train plowed through a bumping post at the track's end and came to rest atop an escalator. Were it not for the overnight hour, the platform and escalator would likely have been filled with people at the busy station. More than 30 people were hurt in the Hollywood-worthy crash though none of the injuries was considered life-threatening.

Investigators have recovered "event-type" recorders from the train, Turpin said. "They are...not like a black box (on an airplane), but they do have some minimal recording devices on the cars," he said.

The NTSB also recovered “quite a bit of video evidence,” Turpin said. There are as many as 41 video cameras at the station, as well as the on-train videos, he noted. Cameras are on each car, and there is also a forward-facing camera on the operator’s car.

The video evidence is being forwarded to the NTSB in Washington, D.C., for analysis.

The lead train car will need to be “cut apart” to remove it from the escalator, Turpin said, adding that officials did not know how long it would take.

It also wasn't clear when train service to the airport would resume. Officials said they would continue shuttling passengers via buses from the O'Hare station to Rosemont.

rwrnski@tribune.com (<mailto:rwrnski@tribune.com>)

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TSB Data Show Increase in Rail Accidents Involving Dangerous Goods Last Year

By Carolyn King



The Lac-Megantic derailment.

Associated Press

Canada's transportation-safety regulator confirmed Wednesday what many had already suspected—there were more rail accidents involving dangerous goods last year than in recent memory.

The Transportation Safety Board said it received 1,067 reports of rail accidents last year, almost matching the five-year average and up from 1,027 in 2012. But the number of rail accidents involving dangerous goods totaled 144, up from the five-year average of 133 and well ahead of the 119 in 2012.

Seven rail accidents resulted in a “dangerous goods release” in 2013, more than double the five-year average of three. Five of those involved petroleum crude oil. The increase comes as crude-oil shipments skyrocketed to 160,000 carloads in 2013 from 500 carloads in 2009, the agency said.

The tragic derailment of a crude-carrying train in Lac-Megantic, Quebec in July 2013 pushed last year's rail-related fatalities to 127, well above the five-year average of 76, the TSB said.

Find more on its 2013 rail-safety findings [here](#).

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Minnesota Oil Spill: Canadian Train Derails, Spilling 30,000 Gallons Of Crude In U.S.

Reuters | By David Sheppard and Jeffrey Jones

Posted: 03/27/2013 7:04 pm EDT | Updated: 05/27/2013 5:12 am EDT



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NEW YORK/CALGARY March 27 (Reuters) - A mile-long train hauling oil from Canada derailed and leaked 30,000 gallons of crude in western Minnesota on Wednesday, as debate rages over the environmental risks of transporting tar sands

across the border.
(http://www.pinterest.com/pin/create/button/?media=&description=Train+Derails+In+Minnesota%2C+Causing+Massive+Oil+Spill&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/28/minnesota-oil-spill_n_2967118.html)
The leak - the first major spill of the modern North American crude-by-rail transit boom - came when 14 cars on a 94-car Canadian Pacific train left the tracks about 15 miles north west of Minneapolis near the town of Parkers Prairie, the Otter Tail Sheriff's Department said.

Canadian Pacific Railway Ltd, the country's second-largest railroad, said the company was investigating the incident. CP Spokesman Ed Greenberg said only one 26,000-

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gallon tank car had ruptured, adding it was a mixed freight train carrying crude and other materials.

The company did not comment as to what kind of crude the train was carrying.

But Minnesota Pollution Control Agency spokesman Dan Olson said up to three tank cars were ruptured and an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 gallons - or 475 to 715 barrels - leaked out.

Cold weather had also made the crude thicker, hindering the ability to recover the oil, Olson said, adding the initial cleanup was expected to continue for a day or two.

"We are focusing on drawing up the loose (oil) ... and once that has been taken up, they will then pump up the remaining oil in the tanks," Olson said. "Because of the winter conditions, the ground is frozen and there is not any damage to surface water or ground water."

A photo on the website of a local paper, the Duluth News Tribune, showed two large tank cars lying on either side of the railroad tracks in snow-covered fields.

The derailment is the first major spill of the massive expansion of crude shipment by rail, which has increased rapidly in the last three years as booming North American oil production has outgrown existing pipeline capacity.

Canada is the top exporter of crude to the United States, due to rising output of crude from its vast tar sands deposits.

Growing volumes of that oil have crossed the border via train as production bumps up against pipeline constraints, with around 40,000 barrels per day (bpd) on average shipped to the United States in 2012, according to data from Canada's National Energy Board.

Environmentalists have complained about the impact of developing the reserves, and have sought to blocked TransCanada Corp's controversial Keystone XL project, which would carry oil produced from the oil sands to the U.S. Gulf Coast refining center.

Some experts have argued oil-by-rail carries a higher risk of accidents and spills.

"It is good business for the rails and bad safety for the public," said Jim Hall, a transportation consultant and former chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board.

"Railroads travel through population centers. The safest form of transport for this type of product is a pipeline. This accident could - and ought to - raise the issue for discussion," he added.

Others note that spills from rail cars are rare, and that delivering crude by rail has opened up opportunities in recent years for producers to develop huge volumes of oil production in areas of the United States that are not connected to markets by pipeline.

"It's not very good publicity, but railroads are incredibly safe, they don't spill often," said Tony Hatch, independent transportation analyst with ABH Consulting in New York who has done work for major railroads. "It should not change the opportunity railroads have to make us more energy independent."

Supporters of the Keystone XL pipeline were quick to jump on the derailment as a reason to build the line.

"It should be clear that we need to move more oil by pipeline rather than by rail or truck," said Don Canton, spokesman for North Dakota Senator John Hoeven, who has been one of the chief political proponents of the line. "This is why we need the Keystone XL. Pipelines are both safe and efficient."

Shipments of petroleum on U.S. railroads rose more than 46 percent last year to 540,000 carloads, the Association of American Railroads said in January.

A spokesman for the Federal Railroad Administration said two representatives of the U.S. rail regulator are investigating the incident.

The Otter Tail Sheriff's Department said the train was approximately 5,700 feet in length, or 1.7 kilometers (1.05 miles) long.



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"Once our crews were able to get closer to the rail cars that were involved in the incident, it was determined that only one had been formally compromised," Canadian Pacific's Greenberg said. "We have options to reroute traffic, so we've been able to continue to move trains while we do the thorough job of cleaning up the area."

He also said he did not know if the crude oil was from Canada's oil sands or the originator of the train.

Shares in Canadian Pacific ended down less than half a percent at C\$129.06 on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

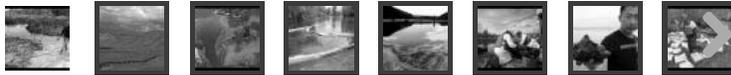
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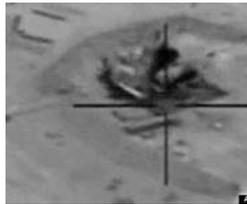
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Courtesy of Regina Hall

A train carrying chemicals derailed in New Augusta, Miss. on Friday, Jan. 31, 2014.

By Elisha Fieldstadt, Staff Writer, NBC News

About 50 people in southeast Mississippi were forced from their homes Friday after 18 cars of an 85-car train carrying chemicals derailed, officials said.

The train traveling from Jackson, Miss., to Mobile, Ala., derailed at 9 a.m. local time (10 a.m. ET) Friday in New Augusta, Miss., according to the Mississippi Department of Motor Vehicles.

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No one was hurt in the accident, but the 50 people living within a half-mile radius were evacuated because the train was carrying an ethanol-based product that spilled, said New Augusta Sheriff Jimmy Smith.

Out of precaution, a nearby highway was also shut down in both directions because ethanol is highly flammable, although no fire was sparked by the derailment.

"We are just trying to get everything ... cleaned up," said Smith, according to NBC affiliate [WDAM \(http://www.wdam.com/story/24599588/train-derails-in-new-augusta\)](http://www.wdam.com/story/24599588/train-derails-in-new-augusta).

The derailment was being investigated, but Smith said the incident was not believed to be the product of a criminal act.

The Red Cross sent volunteers to New Augusta to set up a shelter for those who were displaced. "Residents should pack as if they are going on a small one- to two-day camping trip," said Angie Grajeda, a Red Cross disaster program manager.

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BANGOR DAILY NEWS

Evacuation ordered as train carrying crude oil derails, catches fire in New Brunswick



MATHIEU BELANGER | Reuters

Flames and smoke are seen at the site of a train derailment in Wapske, New Brunswick, Jan. 8, 2014. A Canadian National Railway train carrying propane and crude oil derailed and caught fire on Tuesday in northwest New Brunswick, Canada, the latest in a string of train accidents that have put the surging crude-by-rail business under heavy scrutiny. No one was injured but about 45 nearby homes were evacuated.

By Solarina Ho, Reuters

Posted Jan. 07, 2014, at 9:29 p.m.

A train carrying propane and crude oil derailed Tuesday night in northwest New Brunswick, Canada, causing a fire and the evacuation of local residents. There were no reports of injuries, according to local officials and the railroad.

The Canadian National Railway train, which carried “dangerous goods” including propane and crude oil, derailed near the village of Plaster Rock at about 7 p.m. local time, according to Jim Feeny, director of public and government affairs at CN.

An “undesired brake application” caused Tuesday night’s derailment in New Brunswick of a Canadian National Railway train carrying crude oil and propane tanker cars, the Transportation Safety Board of Canada said on Wednesday.

A transportation board official told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that a mechanical failure caused the train brakes to go into emergency mode. As a result, the train stopped as quickly as possible.

CN officials said Wednesday morning that the derailment includes five cars containing crude and three containing propane. The company said its dangerous goods specialists safely approached “derailed and burning cars” at first light. The specialists’ goal is to determine which cars are on fire and that inspection is ongoing.

CN added it has reports that fire has “diminished considerably” from last night. CN and local officials are working jointly to find best response to extinguish the fires and deal with derailed cars and their contents, the company said.

Plaster Rock is approximately 35 miles east of Caribou, Maine.

A spokesman said 17 cars derailed, including propane tankers, crude tankers, a locomotive and hopper cars, but said no one knew whether the cars had been full.

This latest derailment comes a little more than a week after a train carrying crude oil in the booming oil state of North Dakota derailed and exploded.

A series of explosive derailments has reignited the push for tougher regulation as a boom in U.S. oil production has dramatically increased the number of oil trains moving across the continent as pipelines fail to keep up with growing supply.

The derailment in New Brunswick happened about 3.7 miles east of the village of about 1,000 in a mainly wooded area, according to Sharon DeWitt, emergency measures coordinator for Plaster Rock. As a precaution, the few homes in the 1.25 mile area around the derailment site have been evacuated.

DeWitt said fire officials say the cars appear to have been mostly empty except for some propane residue, and are burning.

There have been five major accidents in the past year involving a train carrying crude oil. The most devastating occurred in Quebec in July last year, when a train derailed and exploded in the town of Lac Megantic, killing 47.

Some politicians have called for a phase-out or retrofit of old tankers that do not meet current safety standards and are prone to puncture.

Watch bangordailynews.com for updates.

<http://bangordailynews.com/2014/01/07/news/world-news/evacuation-ordered-as-train-derails-catches-fire-in-new-brunswick/> printed on October 28, 2014

AP / October 19, 2013, 8:13 PM

Fiery tanker train derailment in Canada



This photo provided by Royal Canadian Mounted Police, emergency crews work a massive fire after a CN tanker train carrying oil and gas derailed in Gainford, Alberta, Canada, west of Edmonton on Saturday, Oct. 19, 2013. Canadian National spokesman Louis-Antoine Paquin said 13 cars, four carrying petroleum crude oil and nine loaded with liquified petroleum gas, came off the tracks around 1 a.m. local time in the hamlet of Gainford, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) from Edmonton. The entire community of roughly 100 people was evacuated. / AP PHOTO/RCMP VIA THE CANADIAN PRESS

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GAINFORD, ALBERTA | Emergency crews battled a massive fire Saturday after a Canadian National tanker train carrying oil and gas derailed west of Edmonton, Alberta, overnight. No injuries have been reported so far.

Canadian National spokesman Louis-Antoine Paquin said 13 cars - four carrying petroleum crude oil and nine loaded with liquified petroleum gas - came off the tracks around 1 a.m. local time in the hamlet of Gainford, about 50 miles from Edmonton. The entire community of roughly 100 people was evacuated.

Paquin says three cars containing gas were leaking and on fire. Local officials feared there could be an explosion and declared a state of emergency.

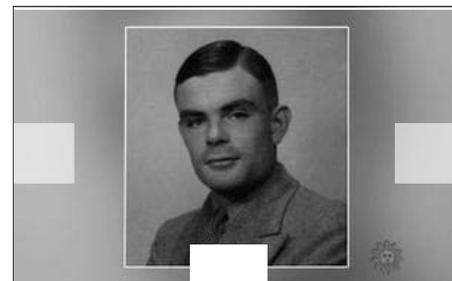
"It's still a risky situation so we need to contain as much as possible and keep people far away," said Carson Mills, spokesman for Parkland County, which includes Gainford.

A local resident described hearing a series of crashes moments before a huge fireball shot into the sky.

"The fireball was so big, it shot across both lanes of the Yellowhead (Highway) and now both lanes of the Yellowhead are closed and there's fire on both sides," said the eyewitness identified only as Duane.

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The train was travelling from Edmonton to Vancouver, British Columbia, Paquin said.

The Transportation Safety Board said it is sending investigators to the scene.

Questions about the increasing transport of oil by rail in the U.S. and Canada were raised in July after an unattended train with 72 tankers of oil rolled into the small Quebec town of Lac-Megantic near the Maine border, derailing and triggering explosions that killed 47 people. The town's center was destroyed. The rail company's chairman blamed the train's operator for failing to set enough hand brakes.

Much of that increase is from oil produced in the Bakken region, a rock formation underlying portions of Montana and North Dakota in the U.S., and Saskatchewan and Manitoba in Canada.

The train that crashed in the small Quebec town was carrying oil from North Dakota to a refinery in New Brunswick, Canada.

The train, using DOT-111 railcars, was operated by a U.S. company, the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway.

In the first half of this year, U.S. railroads moved 178,000 carloads of crude oil. That's double the number during the same period last year and 33 times more than during the same period in 2009. The Railway Association of Canada estimates that as many as 140,000 carloads of crude oil will be shipped on Canada's tracks this year, up from 500 carloads in 2009.

Following the fatal Quebec derailment, Cynthia Quarterman, head of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, has said the U.S. agency expects to publish draft regulations requiring that DOT-111 railcars be retrofitted to address safety concerns. The agency's proposal is intended to fix a dangerous design flaw in the rail cars, which are used to haul oil and other hazardous liquids throughout North America.

Canadian officials had said the oil carried by that freight train had been misclassified as a less dangerous type of crude and they urged U.S. and Canadian regulators to ensure dangerous goods are accurately labeled.

Another key issue is whether railroads should be required to employ a minimum of two workers per train. The train that exploded in Quebec had only one engineer, who wasn't with the train at the time of the accident.

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Train hauling oil derails, spilling 30,000 gallons of crude in Minnesota

Thursday Mar 28, 2013 6:47 AM

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Doug Bellfeuille / Minnesota Pollution Control Agency via Reuters

Crews work to recover an estimated 30,000 gallons of crude oil that leaked from three tanker cars involved in a derailment near Parkers Prairie in Minnesota on Wednesday.

By David Sheppard and Jeffrey Jones, Reuters

A mile-long train hauling oil from Canada derailed, spilling 30,000 gallons of crude in western Minnesota on Wednesday, as debate rages over the environmental risks of transporting tar sands across the border.

The major spill, the first since the start of a boom in North American crude-by-rail transport three years ago, came when 14 cars on a 94-car Canadian Pacific train left the tracks about 150 miles northwest of Minneapolis near the town of Parkers Prairie, the Otter Tail Sheriff's Department said.

Canadian Pacific Railway Ltd, the country's second-largest railroad, said only one 26,000-gallon tank car had ruptured, adding it was a mixed freight train.

CP spokesman Ed Greenberg said he did not know if the crude was from Canada's tar sands or from conventional oil fields.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency spokesman Dan Olson said up to three tank cars were ruptured and an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 gallons - or 475 to 715 barrels - leaked out.

Cold weather had made the crude thicker, hindering the ability to recover the oil, Olson said, adding the initial cleanup was expected to continue for a day or two.

"We are focusing on drawing up the loose (oil) ... and once that has been taken up, they will then pump up the remaining oil in the tanks," Olson said. "Because of the winter conditions, the ground is frozen and there is not any damage to surface water or ground water. After the initial recovery we will see if the oil has soaked into the soil at all."

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In an updated statement, CP said just one car was compromised and other two cars leaked while being moved during the response to the derailment and were contained.

Greenberg said that the safe clean-up efforts were progressing well and without concern.

"There have been reports that clean-up has been challenging. Our crews are taking appropriate steps in ensuring clean-up is conducted appropriately."

A photo provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency showed several large tank cars lying at the side of the railroad tracks in snow-covered fields, as clean-up crews examined the spill and maneuvered pump trucks into position.

"We have options to reroute traffic, so we've been able to continue to move trains while we do the thorough job of cleaning up the area," said Canadian Pacific's Greenberg.

A spokesman for the Federal Railroad Administration said two representatives of the U.S. rail regulator are investigating the incident.

There has been a rapid increase in rail transport of crude in the last three years as booming North American oil production has outgrown existing pipeline capacity.

Canada is the top exporter of crude to the United States, due to rising output of crude from its vast tar sands deposits.

Around 40,000 barrels per day on average were shipped to the United States in 2012, according to data from Canada's National Energy Board.

Suncor Energy Inc SU.TO, Canada's largest oil company, pulled the plug on its long-delayed and partially built Voyageur oil sands upgrading project in northern Alberta on Wednesday, citing surging volumes of crude from the Bakken.

'Good business for the rails and bad safety for the public'

Environmentalists have complained about the impact of developing the reserves, and have sought to block TransCanada Corp's controversial Keystone XL project, which would carry oil produced from the oil sands to the U.S. Gulf Coast refining center.

Some experts have argued oil-by-rail carries a higher risk of accidents and spills.

"It is good business for the rails and bad safety for the public," said Jim Hall, a transportation consultant and former chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board.

"Railroads travel through population centers. The safest form of transport for this type of product is a pipeline. This accident could - and ought to - raise the issue for discussion."

Others noted that spills from rail cars are rare, and crude-by-rail has opened up opportunities for companies to develop huge volumes of oil production in places like the Bakken shale fields in North Dakota, which are not well served by pipelines.

Total shipments of petroleum on U.S. railroads rose more than 46 percent last year to 540,000 carloads, the Association of American Railroads said in January.

"It's not very good publicity, but railroads are incredibly safe, they don't spill often," said Tony Hatch, independent transportation analyst with ABH Consulting in New York who has done work for major railroads. "It should not change the opportunity railroads have to make us more energy independent."

Supporters of the Keystone XL pipeline were quick to jump on the derailment as a reason to build the pipeline.

"It should be clear that we need to move more oil by pipeline rather than by rail or truck," said Don Canton, spokesman for North Dakota Senator John Hoeven, who has been one of the chief political proponents of the line. "This is why we need the Keystone XL. Pipelines are both safe and efficient."

Hoeven has supported the line as it would help carry oil produced in North Dakota to higher priced refining centers on the coast, and could help further expand production in the state that now pumps more oil than Alaska.

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From: Martin Akel <akelassoc@earthlink.net>

To: p66-railspur-comments@co.slo.ca.us

Date: 11/02/2014 01:19 PM

Subject: Response To The REIR - Damage To SLO County's Ag Economy & Reputation

Dear Mr. Murry:

As you and members of the SLO County Planning Board and BOS recognize, "agriculture" is a primary driver of business in SLO County. But the recently released REIR contains impacts that can devastate that business and excellent "ag" reputation of SLO County ... from strawberries to citrus to vineyards ... all of which provides stability to the local economy.

a. Agricultural Impacts At The Santa Maria Refinery: (4.2) "In the event of an oil spill at the SMR due to the unloading operations there could be impacts to agricultural crops on adjacent properties. These impacts could be direct oiling of the crops or due to impacts to surface or groundwater. These impacts at the SMR were found to be less than significant with mitigation."

b. Agricultural Impacts Along The Mainline: (4.2) HOWEVER, a far greater danger (Class I) is posed to all of SLO County by crude oil trains potentially derailling along the mainline ...

- "The addition of up to five train round trips per week on the UPRR mainline routes would increase the potential for spills or fire-related impacts on adjacent agricultural soils in the event of an accident, derailment or other upset conditions during transport along the mainline routes."
- "The worst case spill from a unit train on the mainline tracks was assumed to be 180,000 gallons (about six tanker cars)."
- "The project could result in effects that impair adjacent agricultural uses along the UPRR mainline in the event of a derailment and/or spill, including the generation of contaminated air emissions, soil and water contamination, and increased risk of fire, which have the potential to adversely affect adjacent agricultural areas."
- "An accident along the mainline routes could also create a fire hazard in agricultural areas, which could spread substantially beyond the areas directly adjacent to the tracks. As shown in Figures 4.2-4 through 4.2-6, the mainline rail routes pass through numerous prime, statewide or local important farm lands. All of these agricultural areas could be impacted in the unlikely event of an oil spill in close proximity to these areas. In the event of an oil spill adjacent to these areas, there could be a complete loss of the agricultural resources due to fire or oil spill in the vicinity of the impact area."

The Phillips 66 plan would add 520, 1.5 mile-long trains to SLO County, entering and leaving each year.

AKM-03

That's why the REIR classifies the above threats as "Class I" impacts. There would be no way to prevent potential derailments and all of the outcomes from them. The only approach left would be to attempt to recover and clean up the results of major oil spills, fires, etc. ... none of which would likely be done completely or satisfactorily.

Such spoilage of SLO County's agricultural resources will also result in a destruction of our County's reputation for growing wine, strawberries, and other crops vital to tourism and our economy.

Therefore, the Rail Terminal project should be rejected. If there is no Terminal, there will be no impact on our agricultural resources.

Sincerely,
Martin Akel

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