

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Tiskilwa Train Derailment - Removal Polrep  
Initial Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region V

**Subject:** POLREP #1  
Initial  
Tiskilwa Train Derailment  
Z5L2  
Tiskilwa, IL  
Latitude: 41.2899170 Longitude: -89.4909970

**To:**  
**From:** Leonard Zintak, On-Scene Coordinator  
**Date:** 10/8/2011  
**Reporting Period:** 10/7/11-10/8/11

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>	<b>Contract Number:</b>
<b>D.O. Number:</b>	<b>Action Memo Date:</b>
<b>Response Authority:</b> CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b> Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b> EPA	<b>Incident Category:</b> Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b> Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>
<b>Mobilization Date:</b> 10/7/2011	<b>Start Date:</b> 10/7/2011
<b>Demob Date:</b>	<b>Completion Date:</b>
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>	<b>RCRIS ID:</b>
<b>ERNS No.:</b>	<b>State Notification:</b>
<b>FPN#:</b>	<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>

#### 1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response

#### 1.1.2 Site Description

The Tiskilwa Train Derailment Site is located at Railroad MP 122.4 in Tiskilwa, Bureau County, Illinois. Nine of the derailed train cars contained ethanol. Several ethanol cars caught fire and ethanol was spilled. At this time it is unknown how much ethanol has been released. The fire is currently under control. The incident occurred at 0255 on October 7, 2011 and was reported to the NRC at 0441 on October 7, 2011.

##### 1.1.2.1 Location

The Tiskilwa Train Derailment Site is located at Railroad MP 122.4 in Tiskilwa, Bureau County, Illinois.

##### 1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The chemical involved in this incident involves Denatured Ethanol. The Denatured Ethanol is 95%-98% Ethanol and 2-5% Gasoline. The benzene content is estimated less than 0.1%. The chemicals of concern are Benzene, Ethanol, Particulates and Carbon Monoxide. Benzene is a known carcinogen. Particulates in the air can cause adverse health risks.

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

#### 2.1.1 Narrative

The Tiskilwa Train Derailment Site is located at Railroad MP 122.4 in Tiskilwa, Bureau County, Illinois. OSC Len Zintak and the START contractors, mobilized to begin emergency response activities on October 7, 2011. Iowa Interstate Railroad (PRP) reported that a large train derailment (96 cars) occurred in Tiskilwa, Illinois. Nine of the derailed train cars contained ethanol. Several ethanol cars caught fire and ethanol was spilled. At this time it is unknown how much ethanol spilled. Reportedly ¼ to a ½ mile of cars derailed. Local officials initially evacuated residents living in a half mile radius of the derailment. As of October 7, 2011, 40 to 45 homes were still evacuated. START contractors and railroad contractors are conducting perimeter air monitoring with AreaRAEs and MultiRAEs. In addition, START is collecting water samples and is monitoring water quality in Plow Hollow Creek and Big Bureau Creek. Big Bureau Creek flows towards

the east and into the Illinois River at approximately 8 miles downstream. Water quality monitoring will be conducted as needed at the Illinois River.

#### **2.1.2 Response Actions to Date**

On October 7, 2011, U.S. EPA was notified of the incident through the NRC. OSC Len Zintak mobilized START contractors to begin emergency response activities on October 7, 2011. U.S. EPA START contractors are conducting 24 hour air monitoring with AreaRAEs, MultiRAEs and personal particulate meters. VOC readings range from 1 ppm to 3 ppm and particulate readings ranged from 0.01 to 0.6 milligrams per cubic meter. ATSDR has recommended an ambient air residential evacuation action level specific for ethanol at 500 ppm. Water monitoring was conducted in Plow Hollow Creek and Big Bureau Creek. START is utilizing an YSI water quality meter, which is monitoring for pH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, temperature and oxidation-reduction potential (ORP). All readings were within acceptable limits. Illinois EPA collected water samples and will run analysis for parameters including VOCs, SVOCs, pH and dissolved oxygen. On October 8, 2011 START collected water and air samples for parameters including VOCs and pH.

The local fire departments from surrounding communities have been conducting fire fighting operations, which include the application of fire suppression foam and water. The water and foam is being used to cool down the burning ethanol rail cars. Up to 1.2 million gallons of water and foam is being applied per day. The run-off does not appear to be flowing down gradient toward the east and it may be absorbing into the soil in the vicinity of the derailment. The migration of the firefighting water runoff will be monitored closely.

The Iowa Interstate Railroad (PRP) contractors have constructed earthen containment berms along the railroad tracks toward the east to help contain the water. Railroad contractors have conducted air monitoring and sampling, as well as surface water sampling. Ethanol product is being off-loaded from one of the rail cars into tanker trucks for removal from the Site.

#### **2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)**

The Iowa Interstate Railroad is the PRP and has assumed responsibility for the mitigation of the incident.

### **2.2 Planning Section**

#### **2.2.1 Anticipated Activities**

- 1) U.S. EPA will continue 24 hour real-time air monitoring and will oversee the PRP air monitoring activities conducted by their contractor CTEH.
- 2) U.S. EPA will conduct air, water and soil sampling, as needed.
- 3) U.S. EPA is coordinating with the PRP, Bureau County Health Department and with IEPA to investigate the need to sample private residential wells in the vicinity of the derailment.

#### **2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities**

See Section 2.2.1

#### **2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

See Section 2.2.1

#### **2.2.2 Issues**

None.

### **2.3 Logistics Section**

NA

### **2.4 Finance Section**

No information available at this time.

### **2.5 Other Command Staff**

#### **2.5.1 Safety Officer**

All work was conducted under a health and safety plan.

#### **2.6 Public Information Officer**

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has a PIO on scene and is addressing all inquiries from the media at this time.

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

The Unified Command consist of local fire departments, law enforcement, county health departments, Illinois EPA, Illinois EMA, Illinois DOT, Illinois DNR, U.S. EPA, OSHA, NTSB, FRA and FBI.

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

See Section 3.1

**4. Personnel On Site**

U.S EPA OSC - 1  
START - 5

**5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

**6. Additional sources of information**

NA

**7. Situational Reference Materials**

No information available at this time.