

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



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region VII

**Subject:** POLREP #4  
Progress  
CPR Train Derailment  
Balltown, IA  
Latitude: 42.6618336 Longitude: -90.8493948

**To:** Dave Williams, USEPA

**From:** Eric Nold, OSC Joe Davis, OSC (Duty Officer)

**Date:** 2/7/2015

**Reporting Period:** 2/7/15, 0800hr. - 2/8/15, 0800hr

## 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> OPA	<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> 2/5/2015	<b>Start Date:</b>	2/5/2015
<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> E15703	<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

#### 1.1.1 Incident Category

OPA Emergency Response

#### 1.1.2 Site Description

Canadian Pacific Railroad train derailment of denatured (3-5% natural gasoline and/or gasoline) ethanol into the Mississippi River. This portion of the rail line is along a steep and remote river bluff. Access is difficult.

##### 1.1.2.1 Location

Right descending bank of the Mississippi River, 10 miles north of Dubuque, Iowa near Balltown, Iowa.

##### 1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Discharge of approximately 55,000 gallons of denatured (3-5% natural gasoline and/or gasoline) ethanol impacting the Mississippi River.

#### 1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

Ongoing

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

#### 2.1.1 Narrative

At 1120 hours Central Time (CT), Wednesday, 2/4/15, a southbound Canadian Pacific freight train derailed eleven railcars on the right descending bank of the Mississippi River 10 miles north of Dubuque, Iowa near Balltown, Iowa. Initial reports indicated approximately 20,000-30,000 gallons of denatured (3-5% natural gasoline) ethanol were discharged impacting the Mississippi River. One railcar ignited as a result of the derailment. Up to six railcars containing ethanol derailed also potentially involved in the discharge. Local, State, and Federal responders are on the scene coordinating response efforts.

As of 2/7/15, the estimate of denature ethanol discharged is approximately 55,000 gallons.

#### 2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

2/7/15 Update from Unified Command on scene:

OSC Nold stated that all of the cars and locomotives have been move to the staging area. The CPR contractors will continue vacuum-truck-transfer of residual product from the staged cars to tanker trucks for transport off of the scene. The cars will then be inerted (vented), and scrapped for

disposal/recycling.

The rail tracks were reopened around 0400 this morning. Two trains passed today. A 10 mph speed limit has been imposed at the scene for train traffic.

Contractors will be assessing the effectiveness of steam cleaning/vacuuming product material from the creek ice.

Preliminary estimates of denatured ethanol accounting:

- 305,000 gallons transloaded for use or disposal
- 55,000 gallons unaccounted (consumed in fire, spilled to soil, or discharged to river or ice)

The river sampling plan was modified to include two (2) additional sediment samples and three (3) additional water samples at the derailment scene. A detailed, modified plan will be provided to Unified Command by CPR on Monday. All water and ice samples are being submitted for analysis using EPA Method 8260C. Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin were contacted today to discuss if this is the acceptable method for their needs. Iowa agreed it was acceptable. Wisconsin and Illinois are still verifying.

Wisconsin DNR accompanied sampling crews today and oversaw/assisted with sample collection. Water velocity samples taken today indicated 0.95 ft/sec measured in the main channel at 25cm below ice/water interface.

IDNR Fish and Wildlife personnel collected some fish from downstream of scene including crappie, bluegill, sunfish, and perch. They observed many anglers out fishing today.

Crews observed no remaining sheen in areas where open water was visible along the Iowa bank.

River levels are lower than what is indicated on most aerial maps. Islands are visible above the water for about two miles downstream of the scene.

All DO results through 2/7/15 indicate levels that would be expected at each location according to fisheries biologists at the scene.

Preliminary reports of analytical results for ethanol indicate very low level detects (below the reporting/quantitation limit but above the detection limit (less than 1ppm)) at locations to transect 11 (which is just upstream of the dam).

CPR plans to provide analytical results on 2/8/15. They will improve the process for provision and coordination of results going forward.

The cottage at the scene, observable in some photographs, is not inhabited. It is a rental cabin. Water is supplied, not for consumption, to the cottage by a spring which emerges from the hillside up gradient of the site.

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

The RP has been identified as Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR).

### 2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
denatured ethanol		~55,000 gallons discharged			

## 2.2 Planning Section

### 2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

OSC Nold and one START contractor will likely demobilize on 2/8/15. OSC Smith and one START contractor will remain. EPA continues to support IDNR and the IC for oversight of environmental response activities.

#### 2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

CPR and their contractors are performing safety/air monitoring for workers at the scene.

The CPR contractors will continue vacuum-truck-transfer of residual product from the staged cars to tanker trucks for transport off of the scene. The cars will then be inerted (vented), and scrapped for disposal/recycling.

Contractors will be assessing the effectiveness of steam cleaning/vacuuming product material from the creek ice.

CPR continues to collect river samples. The river sampling plan was modified to include two (2) additional sediment samples and three (3) additional water samples at the derailment scene. A detailed, modified plan will be provided by CPR on Monday. All water and ice samples are being submitted for analysis using EPA Method 8260C. Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin were contacted today to discuss if this is the acceptable

method for their needs. Iowa agreed it was acceptable. Wisconsin and Illinois are still verifying.

IDNR Fish and Wildlife personnel are analyzing the substrate (sediment/mussel samples) that was collected on Wednesday at the Upper Mississippi Environmental Science Center in LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

State and Federal fish and wildlife agencies continue to assess the impact to fish and wildlife including possible populations of the endangered Higgin's Eye and Sheep Nose mussels. These officials are advising on response actions to minimize impacts to these populations.

#### **2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

CPR crews completed restaging of tank cars on 2/7/15. Complete removal of ethanol from the tank cars at the staging area will take an additional couple days.

Remediation will take place after all cars are moved from the accident scene and a plan is approved by IDNR.

#### **2.2.2 Issues**

Access to the scene remains difficult.

Communications are poor and strict safety and personnel accountability utilizing a buddy-system are being enforced at the scene.

Monitoring and sampling that informs certainty of pollutant conditions in the river, below the ice, and downstream of the scene is very challenging .

### **2.3 Logistics Section**

Logistical issues are being handled by the RP and local IC.

### **2.4 Finance Section**

#### **2.4.1 Narrative**

EPA Region 7 has opened the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund. FPN# E15703 – The requested ceiling is currently \$50,000. No agencies have requested funding through a Pollution Removal Funding Authorization (PRFA).

### **2.5 Other Command Staff**

#### **2.5.1 Safety Officer**

Safety responsibilities are being fulfilled by the local IC and CPR or their contractors. EPA is integrated into the UC/ICS structure at the scene.

#### **2.5.2 Liaison Officer**

N/A

#### **2.5.3 Information Officer**

EPA Region 7 Public Information Officers are coordinating with the IDNR PIO.

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

The local Fire Department is the Incident Command. EPA will integrate into the existing ICS structure and support the local IC and State of Iowa.

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

EPA Region 5  
USCG Sector UMR  
USFWS  
IDNR and IDNR Fish and Wildlife  
WDNR  
Illinois EPA  
Sherrill Fire Department  
Dubuque Hazmat  
Dubuque Emergency Management Agency

## **4. Personnel On Site**

EPA OSCs (2) Eric Nold and Heath Smith  
START contractor (2)

## **5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

## **6. Additional sources of information**

### **6.1 Internet location of additional information/report**

### **6.2 Reporting Schedule**

Polreps will be generated at least daily by about 0900 hours Central Time daily until 2/9/15 at which time the schedule will likely be extended.

## **7. Situational Reference Materials**

No information available at this time.

