

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region VI
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2006

From: Eric Delgado

Subject: Initiation of Action
Crawford Train Derailment
Crawford, TX
Latitude: 31.5343308
Longitude: -97.4430700

POLREP No.:	1 Site #:
Reporting Period:	D.O. #:
Start Date:	Response Authority:
Mob Date:	Response Type:
Demob Date:	NPL Status:
Completion Date:	Incident Category:
CERCLIS ID #:	Contract #
RCRIS ID #:	

Site Description

On September 19, 2006, the National Response Center (NRC) notified EPA Region 6 (EPA) of a Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) train derailment in a semi-rural area at the edge of the city of Crawford, McLennan County, Texas. According to BNSF representatives, 24 rail cars derailed including tank cars containing vinyl acetate, styrene monomers, tetrafluoroethane, and ethanolamine. The tank car containing ethanolamine was breached and approximately 22,000 gallons was released to the ground and nearby drainage ditch. A small vapor plume from the leaking tank car caused the evacuation of a one-half mile radius from approximately 1900 until 2200 when the air monitoring results by the City of Waco Hazmat team determined residents of the area could safely return.

The Crawford Volunteer Fire Department responded immediately to the incident, and began to secure the scene. BNSF also mobilized its hazmat team and multiple contractors immediately to the site. OSC Delgado and the EPA Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) mobilized to the site to provide technical assistance and conduct on-scene air monitoring. Other agencies responding to the incident included the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and McLennan County Emergency Management.

Current Activities

Upon arrival, OSC Delgado and START met with BNSF, TCEQ, and McLennan County representatives and toured the site. Air monitoring by BNSF contractors showed there were not any detectable levels of ethanolamine or any of its combustion products in residential areas or within a 150 foot radius from the tanker car. The tank car was pulled away from the rest of the derailment and isolated a few hundred feet away. The remaining contents of the tank car is currently being off-loaded into a 5,000 gallon vacuum truck.

BNSF and START contractors conducted continuous air monitoring during the night around the site perimeter. Instruments including amine and ammonia sensors indicated there were no readings above background levels.

Next Steps

EPA and START will continue to monitor BNSF's actions, coordinate with other agencies, and conduct air monitoring as necessary. BNSF contractors will continue to remove free product from the tank car and drainage ditch. BNSF contractors will also work to remove the rail cars and debris from the railroad tracks.

Key Issues

The initial threat to nearby residents from fire and the initial plume of contaminants in the air were the main concerns. However, no residents were reported to have been injured or sick from the plume. Product run-off from the breached tank car was also a concern, but a berm was constructed to prevent product from leaving the site.

response.epa.gov/crawfordderailment