

**United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region VI
POLLUTION REPORT**

Date: Sunday, May 18, 2008

From: Warren Zehner

To: Ragan Broyles, EPA

Debbie Dietrich, EPA

Subject: Initiation of Action

HCL Railcar Release Lafayette

Inner Freight Switching Yard, Lafayette, LA

Latitude: 30.2351880

Longitude: -92.0625870

POLREP No.: 1

Site #:

Reporting Period:

D.O. #:

Start Date: 5/17/2008

Response Authority: CERCLA

Mob Date: 5/17/2008

Response Type: Emergency

Demob Date:

NPL Status: Non NPL

Completion Date:

Incident Category:

CERCLIS ID #:

Contract #

RCRIS ID #:

Site Description

On May 17, 2008, at 0648 hours the National Response Center was notified of a train derailment and subsequent hydrochloric acid release near railroad milepost 147.1 in Lafayette, Lafayette Parish, Louisiana. (NRC No. 871199). At approximately 0130 hours on May 17, 2008, six rail cars attached to a Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) train (No.RGFC311117) derailed under the Louisiana Highway (LH) 3184 overpass. Two of the derailed cars were carrying fatty alcohol, three were carrying hydrochloric acid (HCL) and one was carrying ethylene oxide (EO). The remaining 17 railcars and two locomotives did not derail. It was reported that an unknown volume of HCL had leaked from one of the derailed cars. The Louisiana State Police HazMat Unit assumed control of the incident and issued an evacuation order for all residences and businesses within a one radius of the site. The cause of the derailment has not been determined, at this time. BNSF representatives reported the incident to the NRC and assumed responsibility for the cleanup as the responsible party (RP). BNSF has contracted Hulcher Services Inc. of Port Allen, Louisiana to manage the movement and restaging of the derailed cars. The RP has also contracted United States Environmental Services (USES) of Gonzales, Louisiana to manage HCL clean up activities. Lyondell is the manufacturer of the ethylene oxide and has provided Specialized Response Solutions (SRS) of Houston, Texas to provide assistance with the handling of the derailed ethylene oxide railcar.

Current Activities

On May 17, 2008, FOSC Zehner, who was conducting a removal action in the area, and START3 members mobilized to the incident site to conduct emergency response activities and provide assistance as requested by the State. The FOSC and START3 meet with incident command officials and Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) representatives. LDEQ representatives stated that six railcars derailed, two were carrying fatty alcohol, three were carrying HCL and one was carrying EO. LDEQ also stated that approximately 10,000 gallons of HCL has spilled into a drainage ditch that runs along the south side of the railroad. Earthen berms have been built across the ditch to the east and to the west of the derailment scene to contain the HCL spill.

LDEQ and the Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health (CTEH) are both conducting perimeter are monitoring for acid gas and chlorine gas. Air monitoring readings at the perimeter have been below action levels. Air sampling results are expected to become available some time in the following week.

BNSF subcontractors used approximately 270 tons of agriculture grade lime to neutralize the HCL on the ground in the vicinity of the ethylene oxide railcar (west side of bridge). After the spilled HCL was neutralized, a section of I-10 was closed as a precaution while Hulcher Services restaged the overturned EO railcar back onto the railroad. This process took approximately 2 hours and was completed at approximately 2100 hours. No EO material was reported to have leaked from the derailed car. After completion of this process, the FOSC demobilized START3 for the day. RP contractors continued to

work on neutralizing the remaining spilled HCL (east side of the bridge)through the night.

On May 18, 2008, EPA representatives remobilized to the incident site. Currently, all six derailed cars have been uprighted and restaged on the railroad. BNSF subcontractors are neutralizing the remaining contents of the damaged HCl railcar. After neutralization has been completed the contents will be removed and stored in poly tanks pending disposal. RP crews will again work through the night. At 1700 hours the FOSC demobilized START3 for the day.

Planned Removal Actions

BNSF, with the direction of LDEQ, will collect eight background soil samples and submit them to a local laboratory for pH analysis. The background pH results will be used as cleanup criteria for the excavation and remediation activities to be conducted within the spill area.

Next Steps

Remediation of the contaminated soils and repair of the tracks. It is estimated that approximately 100 feet of railroad track will have to be replaced as a result of the derailment.

Key Issues

The evacuation of the 1.0 mile radius continues.

The train derailment may have affected the tructural integrity of the LA3184 bridge. The bridge will remain closed until inspected by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD).

Estimated Costs *

	Budgeted	Total To Date	Remaining	% Remaining
Extramural Costs				
Intramural Costs				
Total Site Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%

* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

response.epa.gov/Railcar_Lafayette

POLREP #1 Last Updated 5/18/2008