



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

DATE:

March 29, 2024

TO:

The Honorable Josh Shapiro
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

FROM:

Randy Padfield
Director, PA Emergency Management Agency

TIME PERIOD:

This report covers the period from 0600 hours, March 28, 2024, through 0600 hours, March 29, 2024.

STATUS REPORT: (as of 0600 hours)

THREAT STATUS:

National Terrorism Advisory System: There are no current advisories.

Commonwealth Response Coordination Center (CRCC) Status: Normal Operations

County EOC Activations: None

Municipal EOC Activations: None

CAPABILITIES STATUS:

PA All-Hazards Type-3 Incident Management / Team – Mission Capable
PA-Task Force 1 (PA-TF1) – Mission Capable

INFRASTRUCTURE STATUS:

Major Road Closures: None
Power Outage Reports: As of 0530 hours, 608 customers
Telephone Outage Reports: None

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:

OPEN:

MISSING ENDANGERED PERSON ADVISORY (MEPA) – Berks County, 3/19/24 - A MEPA was issued for a 16-year-old black female who was last seen near Cheltenham Drive in Wyomissing Borough on 3/9/24 at approximately 1200 hours. She is described as 5 feet 2 inches tall, 120 pounds, black hair, and brown eyes. Her clothing description is unknown. Police believe she may be at special risk of harm or injury.

RAILROAD INCIDENT – Northampton County, 3/2/24 - Emergency units responded to a train derailment in the area on 2270 Riverside Road in Lower Saucon Township. Upon arrival, crews reported multiple cars derailed with two locomotives tankers on their side with two partially in the Lehigh River. One contained ethanol and the two others contained liquid propane gas (LPG). This is a Norfolk Southern (NS) freight-only line and rail traffic was stopped. The Lehigh County HAZMAT team monitored the air with no readings. A representative of the railroad responded and evaluated the scene. Northampton County EOC activated to an enhanced level to assist with resources. There were no shelter-in-place orders or evacuations. It was determined three trains were involved in the incident. Train #24X-01 was travelling eastbound on the tracks and was subsequently rear-ended by Train #268H which caused an unknown number of cars to derail. The third train, #19G-01, was travelling westbound and crashed into the derailed cars causing an unknown number of cars to derail. Personnel were still in the locomotives and rescue operations were conducted. Northampton County boats reported an unknown sheen on the river. NS Police secured the scene and NS HAZMAT responded. A "slow drip" diesel leak was reported coming from one of the engines that was leaking into the river. Additionally, approximately 20 cubic yards of plastic pellets spilled from Car #GPLX77419 onto the ballast. Until the NTSB arrives, no re-rail or cleanup operations can occur. NS requested PennDOT assistance with extended road closure. All Lehigh County units cleared the scene and Northampton County EOC went back to normal operations. DEP NERO responded to support operations. The derailed tank cars that were placarded for ethanol and LPG contain residual amounts and were not leaking. The locomotives leaked approximately 50 gallons of diesel fuel until the leak was plugged; booms were placed to contain any diesel fuel entering the river. Most of the containers were identified and were empty or contained non-hazardous materials. On 3/3/24 the locomotives were pulled from the river. On 3/8/24, NS reported all fluids were removed from both engines that were still on site. The riverbank was replaced with riprap. The tank cars were still on site and awaiting removal. The ethanol tank car was scheduled for cleaning on Wednesday, 3/13/24. Lewis Environmental was on site over the weekend to check on booms still in place on the Lehigh River. The sheen was minimal, but still visible. Stone along the rail beds was replaced. NS followed up with county EMA on Monday, 3/11/24. As of 3/14/24, track repair, cleanup, and rail car recovery operations are ongoing. 3/20/24, Steam cleaning starts tomorrow. Engines and LP cars still on-site waiting removal. Off load for the plastic pellet car is set for Monday 3/25/24. As of 3/26/24, PA DEP was on sight and cleared Norfolk Southern to remove booms from the water which should happen later this week. The Ethanol car steam cleaning was completed with no issues. The PVC pellet car still remains on site and the transfer of pellets will wait until the locomotives are removed for easier access. Still no time frame for car removal.

TRAIN VS TRACTOR TRAILER – Somerset County, 8/23/23 - A CSX freight train (L10023) struck a tri-axle truck hauling a trailered bulldozer at Cottage Lane and Carpenters Park Road in Paint Township (Windber). The locomotive had a 2,000-gallon fuel tank that was nearly full when the collision occurred. The tank was slit down the side releasing fuel oil down

the right of way and eventually into the Stonycreek River. Two injured CSX employees were transported to local hospitals for treatment. PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and PA Fish and Boat Commission (FBC) responded. No fish kills were reported. CSX submitted NRC # 1377002. The leak at the tank was stopped and the river was boomed. Fuel was transferred out of the locomotive tank until they ran out of drums. Downstream notifications were made to Cambria County, including two nurseries. The PA FBC notified recreational groups that use the river. The road remains closed in the area. SPSI is the cleanup contractor, and on 8/24/23, they added hard boom around the soft boomed area below the locomotive, replaced the absorbents twice, and placed a second hard boom across the river at the bridge. As of 8/30/23, after rains overnight the right of way for mitigation efforts held. SPSI is scheduled to vacuum the collection area on 9/1/23; and remove the hard and absorbent boom from across the river. This will reopen the river for recreation. A semi-circle will remain with additional hard booms and buoys to create a buffer zone for the recreational vessels navigating nearby. Local recreational clubs and Cambria County were notified to allow nurseries to pull water from Stonycreek River. The roadway remains closed but that is because of another scheduled project that is occurring in the area. On 9/8/23, a 15-day report is being prepared by CSX to submit to PA DEP. Excavating the track ballast may compromise the integrity of the stream bank and track ballast and would close the track for an extended period. SPSI is looking at other options to facilitate the collection of fuel. PA DEP recommended discussions with their Clean Water Program as it would directly relate to the absorbent and collection booms that are being deployed at this time. The track remains closed. As of 9/21/23 - the terrain is not conducive to an interceptor trench and excavation is not considered an alternative. ARCADIS/SPSI looking to potentially flushing the soil with water. As of 11/3/2023, SPSI had been periodically replacing out the absorbents in the Stonycreek River during the month of October. SPSI was waiting on rain to flush the fuel to the absorbents however there was little rain in the last month to achieve this goal. On 11/23/23, SPSI utilized a vacuum to remove 4" of the contaminated rock/soil along the track and ballast. They will replace all of it with new rock. SPSI is also planning to flush the embankment on their own to the absorbents. The PFBC and DEP were both on-site during this recent remediation operation. Due to heavy rains on 11/22/23, most of the absorbent booms washed away and were replaced. SPSI continues to change out the absorbents a few times each week. 3/22/24, contractors continue to monitor the site for contamination.

TRAIN DERAILMENT – Columbiana County, Ohio, 2/3/23 - On 2/3/23 at 2130 hours, mutual aid crews from Beaver County responded to a train derailment near Taggart Street, East Palestine, Ohio. Approximately 53 railcars derailed and some of them caught fire. There were five cars of vinyl chloride within the wreckage. Around 2330 hours a call was received from an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 3 representative, and they advised there was no current impact to PA. EPA Region 5 and Ohio EPA set up air monitoring equipment and they also used handheld monitors, and nothing was detected. Members of the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Southwest Regional Office were also onsite monitoring through daylight and maintained a presence until there was no threat to PA. An IMAAC model showed a potential impact to residences in PA if harmful chemicals were released from any of the derailed cars. Beaver County EMA Coordinator reported that they followed Columbiana County, Ohio's lead and a message was sent out to 16 registered users in the one-mile zone to shelter in place. Ohio later changed their message to an evacuation, but Beaver County remained as a shelter-in-place due to no residences being impacted. Shell Monaca was provided green foam to help extinguish the fires. Clean-up contractors from SPSI and Hepaco responded to the scene. The shelter-in-place order remained in effect for Beaver

County. Beaver County sent tankers from nine departments and an engine to assist in drafting from a lake in town once the railroad deemed it was safe. As of 2/5/23, Columbiana County, Ohio EMA recommended a one-mile evacuation around the incident due to one of the vinyl chloride rail cars showing a temperature increase. This included the 10 homes that were sheltering in place within Beaver County. On 2/6/23, all 20 homes in the PA evacuation zone were evacuated. Beaver County Animal Response Team (CART) requested assistance for trailers from Washington and Westmoreland counties to assist with the evacuation of farm animals from Kindred Spirits Rescue Farm. The recommended evacuation zone remained at one mile. The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) ordered a partial activation of the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center (CRCC) at 1100 hours and Beaver County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) partially activated. A planned controlled detonation was performed to empty five rail cars into a trench to burn off the vinyl chloride. Norfolk Southern established a Family Assistance Center for affected residents in New Waterford, Ohio; Beaver Valley Intermediate School remained open. On 2/7/23, the plume from the controlled detonation on 2/6/23 dissipated with no significant air detection identified by EPA Region 3 or PA DEP. Norfolk Southern conducted wrecking operations of damaged cars at the sight. Normal readings were reported by the Ohio Civil Support Team after monitoring the inside of three residences. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources reported approximately 1,800 fish killed within the streams and creeks that were affected. Air monitoring continued and there were no contaminants or concerns. The PEMA CRCC demobilized on 2/8/23 at 1600 hours. All roads that were closed in PA, including PA-51, were reopened. The Beaver County EOC deactivated at 1200 hours on 2/10/23. A public inquiry line remains operational. On 2/14/23, the EPA identified three other chemicals that were part of the train. They continued to monitor the air and waterways for contamination. On 2/23/23, PEMA, in conjunction with the Departments of Health (DOH) and Environmental Protection, launched a website to provide information to Commonwealth residents about the derailment. On 2/28/23, the Pennsylvania Department of Health opened a Health Resource Center in Darlington Township, Beaver County for residents of Beaver and Lawrence counties who have health concerns following the Norfolk Southern train derailment. On 3/1/23, door-to-door surveys were conducted for 22 households within the 1-mile evacuation zone. Additional discussion led to a decision to do CDC outreach (door knocking) within the 2-mile radius in Pennsylvania, which began on 3/2/23. Approximately 450 healthcare providers participated in three webinars conducted on 2/28/23 and 3/1/23 for major medical providers in the Southwestern Region. Sample testing and review on Norfolk Southern soil sampling continued by Commonwealth agencies. The EPA Region 3 Director accompanied by staff, Pennsylvania Senator Casey, and Representative Deluzio toured the site on 3/2/23. On Monday, 3/6/23, Pennsylvania Governor Shapiro announced that Norfolk Southern has agreed to pay Pennsylvania millions of dollars for the impacts of the train derailment. Norfolk Southern agreed to reimburse local fire departments to replace contaminated or damaged equipment used during the response to the derailment, to provide funds for a Community Relief Fund to be run by officials in Beaver and Lawrence counties, and to reimburse state agencies (DEP, DOH, and PEMA) for associated costs. Norfolk Southern collected soil samples with representatives from the EPA present. Removal of the train tracks closest of Pennsylvania began over the weekend and was completed 3/5/23. Excavation of the contaminated soil began, and odors were expected to be released into the air. Air monitoring was increased during the process which is expected to take at least three to four days depending on the depth of the contaminants in the soil. The EPA requested Norfolk Southern to provide additional financial assistance to residents within one mile of the derailment site if they are impacted by the odors released during the excavation of the soil which the company has agreed too. Pennsylvania state agencies supported another East Palestine Community Resource Fair this Thursday at the East Palestine High School. Beaver County coordinated a

separate Community Resource Fair for Pennsylvania residents for the following week which the state agencies supported. U.S. Senator Bob Casey completed a quick tour and talk at the Health Resource Center Monday morning. A Norfolk Southern contracted company sampled 16 private wells in Pennsylvania. DEP sampled 27 private wells in the area as of Monday with more sampling expected 3/7/23. On 3/8/23 DHS coordinated a call with Beaver and Lawrence counties about the possibility of applying for a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Emergency Response Grant (SERG) to provide funding for additional behavioral health services that may be required following this incident. DOH and PEMA also participated in the call. Excavation work at the site was temporarily stopped due to elevated readings and release of odor. The excavation of the soil at the south tracks of the derailment site was mostly complete. As of 3/13/23, Norfolk Southern was waiting on soil samples to come back from the elevated spots that were detected. Due to contaminants being detected during the initial excavation at two to four inches, additional sampling was done at 12 to 15 inches to make sure all contaminated soil is removed. Soil excavation for the north track was still in the planning process. As of 3/16/23, the excavation of the soil at the south tracks of the derailment site was completed. The Health Resource Center (HRC) completed its final daily operational period at 1400, 3/16/23. The HRC moved to operations on Thursdays beginning 3/23/23. Excavation of the north track and removal of contaminated soil and water continued. OSHA joined the on-site operations to provide support to the safety officer and ensure that the community and personnel are safe during operations. EPA Region 5 conducted an information session focused on air quality and air monitoring on 4/27/23. EPA Region 5 conducted an information session focused on surface water on Thursday, May 11, at the Way Station and First United Presbyterian Church in East Palestine. As of 6/27/23, excavation underneath Pleasant Drive was complete, and the roadway was opened for traffic on 6/28/23. Contamination underneath the north and south tracks was removed, and both tracks are fully operational. As of 7/11/23, surface and ground water sampling plans for the remainder of the cleanup have been approved by EPA. In addition, gravel was laid on the turnaround on East Martin Street in preparation for asphalt to help control erosion and dust. A site storm water inspection was conducted, and additional storm water controls were put into place to improve the existing storm water management plan. EPA hosted a site progress information session on 7/20/23 at the First United Presbyterian Church in East Palestine. Activities are ongoing. As of 7/31/23, Norfolk Southern offered help with indoor cleaning for homes and business for those within the one-to-two-mile Ohio-Pennsylvania evacuation zone. 3/22/24, the EPA and PA DEP continue to monitor wells in the area.

CLOSED:

APARTMENT FIRE – Montgomery County, 3/29/24 - A two-alarm fire occurred at 1 West Main Street in Norristown Borough. Approximately 15-20 residents were evacuated to the nearby lobby of the Montgomery County Courthouse for temporary sheltering. The fire was extinguished, and no injuries were reported. The displaced residents were provided with accommodations at a hotel by apartment management.

RAILROAD INCIDENT – Westmoreland County, 3/28/24 - A CSX train struck an unoccupied disabled passenger vehicle stopped on the rail tracks crossing over PA-981 in South Huntingdon Township, closing the roadway in both directions. No injuries or HAZMAT were reported. Rail traffic was stopped on the double main line, which is shared with Amtrak. No delays were reported. PA-981 was open in about three hours and 45 minutes, and rail traffic resumed in just over four hours.

DISASTER DECLARATIONS:

2/13/24 – Millersburg Borough has issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to power outages affecting independent living facilities and apartments on 2/13/24.

9/25/23 – Blawnox Borough, Allegheny County has issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to a water main break and damages to Freeport Road.

9/23/23 – Oxford Borough, Chester County has issued a Continuation of the Declaration of /Disaster Emergency due to the multi-building structure fire on 9/13/23.

9/19/23 – Fairchance Borough, Fayette County issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to a dam issue that has caused or threatens to cause injury, damage, and suffering to the persons and property of Fairchance Borough on or about 9/19/23.

9/14/23 – Oxford Borough, Chester County has issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to the multi-building structure fire on 9/13/23.

9/13/23 – Clifford Township, Susquehanna County issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to adverse weather on 8/18/23.

9/10/23 – Lackawanna County has issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to the severe thunderstorms and flooding of 9/9/23 through 9/10/23.

08/24/23 – Forest Lake Township, Susquehanna County, issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to adverse weather on 8/18/23.

08/23/23 – New Milford Township, Susquehanna County, issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to adverse weather on 8/18/23.

08/23/23 – Harford Township, Susquehanna County, issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to adverse weather on 8/18/23.

08/23/23 – Susquehanna Depot Borough, Susquehanna County, issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to adverse weather on 8/18/23.

08/18/23 – Rush Township, Susquehanna County, issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to adverse weather on 8/18/23.

08/18/23 – Susquehanna County issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to adverse weather on 8/18/23.

8/14/23 – Plum Borough, Allegheny County, issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to a house explosion on 8/13/23.

6/28/23 - U.S. Small Business Administration issued a notice of an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) declaration, #17973 for the R.M. Palmer Company Factory Explosion that occurred on 3/24/23. The primary county affected is Berks, and the contiguous counties affected are Chester, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, and Schuylkill. The loan application deadline date is 3/28/24.

6/16/23 – West Caln Township, Chester County issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency due to adverse weather and storm damage throughout the township on 6/16/23.

6/12/23 - Governor Josh Shapiro issued a proclamation of disaster emergency for Philadelphia County in response to the I-95 fire and collapse on 6/11/23. The governor's proclamation makes \$7 million of state funds immediately available for the reconstruction of the roadway and authorizes the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Transportation, and the Pennsylvania State Police to use all available resources and personnel, as necessary. This proclamation will remain in place for 21 days, unless extended by the Legislature.

9/10/21 - The Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, requested a major disaster declaration from the President through the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide additional support for state, county and municipal governments, and individuals affected by the remnants of Hurricane IDA between 8/31/21 and 9/5/21. The declaration includes Individual Assistance to individuals and households in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia, and York counties, and assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program in all areas of the Commonwealth. Public Assistance is under review. The President approved the declaration on 9/10/21 under Major Disaster Declaration FEMA-4618-DR. 9/24/21 – Amendment No. 1 designates Bedford and Northampton counties for Individual Assistance. 10/8/21 – Amendment No. 2 designates Bucks, Chester, and Montgomery counties for Public Assistance (already designated for Individual Assistance). 10/14/21 – Amendment No. 3 designates Bedford, Philadelphia, and York counties for Public Assistance (already designated for Individual Assistance). Plus, Fulton, Huntingdon, Luzerne, and Schuylkill counties for Public Assistance. 10/20/21 – Amendment No. 4 designates Delaware County for Public Assistance (already designated for Individual Assistance), and Dauphin County for Public Assistance.

8/31/21 - The Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, signed a statewide Proclamation of Disaster Emergency on 8/31/21 in response to severe weather event Hurricane Ida that impacted the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania causing widespread threats of serious flash and riverine flooding and other adverse impacts throughout the Commonwealth.

3/30/20 - Governor Tom Wolf requested a major disaster declaration from the President through the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide additional support for state, county and municipal governments and certain nonprofits, as well as individuals who are struggling during the COVID-19 outbreak. The request for a major disaster declaration will provide the same emergency protective measures available under the nationwide emergency proclamation; the following Individual Assistance programs: Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Crisis Counseling, Community Disaster Loans, and the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program; and Statewide Hazard Mitigation. The President approved the declaration on 3/30/20 under Major Disaster Declaration FEMA-4506-DR.

11/27/18 – A Major Disaster Declaration was declared on 11/27/18 for severe storms and flooding that occurred 8/10/18 – 8/15/18. Public Assistance (Cat A-G) was approved for Bradford, Columbia, Lackawanna, Lycoming, Montour, Northampton, Schuylkill, Sullivan,

Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming counties. In addition, all areas in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are eligible for assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The designation is FEMA-4408-DR.

CONTIGUOUS STATE EVENTS OF POTENTIAL INTEREST TO PENNSYLVANIA:

Delaware:	Normal Operations
Maryland:	Full Activation - Francis Scott Key Bridge
New Jersey:	Normal Operations
New York:	Normal Operations
Ohio:	Partial Activation - Severe Weather
West Virginia:	Enhanced Watch - Wildfires

24-Hour Projected Weather Statewide:

National Weather Service, 0439 hours, 3/29/24

High-pressure approaching from the Great Lakes, combined with a strengthening storm over the Canadian Maritimes, will result in mostly sunny and breezy conditions across Pennsylvania today. Expect high temperatures to range from the mid-40s over the northern mountains to the mid-50s in the southeast Piedmont.

Fair weather and a diminishing wind are expected tonight as the high-pressure system moves over the state. Lows will range from the upper 20s over the northern mountains to the 30s elsewhere.

Low-pressure approaching from the Midwest will spread rain into much of Pennsylvania by late Saturday afternoon. Highs Saturday will range from the mid-40s over the northwest mountains to the upper 50s over the southwest and southeast corners of the Commonwealth. Drier and milder weather is expected to return at the end of the upcoming weekend.

WATCHES AND WARNINGS:

None



Current Watches, Warnings, and Advisories

- Gale Warning
- Small Craft Advisory
- Wind Advisory



Graphic Created
March 29th, 2024
5:10 AM EDT