

SITUATION REPORT # 1

NEW JERSEY STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

December 3, 2012, 1000 Hours

A. CURRENT SYNOPSIS:

The NJ ROIC and NJOEM are currently monitoring the Train Derailment in Paulsboro, Gloucester County, NJ which has a population of 6,113 (source: 2010 US Census). NJ ROIC operational level is currently at a Level 2 as of 0800hrs this date and NJOEM personnel are staffing the SEOC. NJOEM will provide situational awareness reports to the State, County, Local and allied agencies throughout the event. Updates will follow as needed.

B. INCIDENTS

- At approximately 0715 EST, on Friday, 30 November 2012, a Conrail freight train was derailed when a railroad bridge, spanning the Mantua Creek collapsed.
- Six (6) railcars were derailed and four (4) were partially submerged in the Mantua Creek.
- One (1) railcar, which contained vinyl chloride, was breached causing an air and water release of vinyl chloride. *NOTE: Vinyl chloride is a hazardous, flammable, organic compound. The substance has a sickly sweet odor. Exposure to vinyl chloride can cause dizziness, drowsiness and headaches. Long term exposure has been linked to cancer. Vinyl chloride is a component in the manufacture of plastics.*
- The incident prompted Paulsboro to declare a State of Emergency for the municipality.
- Initially, residents within one half mile were advised to shelter in place.
- Paulsboro schools were closed for the day and neighboring West Deptford school students were sheltered in place.
- Gloucester County OEM later issued a shelter in place order for Paulsboro, East Greenwich and West Deptford.
- At approximately 1430 EST, 30 November 2012, high tide caused an elevated reading of 1 ppm vinyl chloride in the area.
- At approximately 1600 EST, 30 November 2012, an evacuation order was issued for residents in the area of Commerce St., Railroad Ave. and Broad St. effecting approximately 45 residents.
- At 1700 EST, 30 November 2012, an elevated level volatile substance was detected and a water curtain was established to hold down vapors.
- Due to the elevated readings, the emergency declaration was amended to extend evacuations spanning a one half mile radius. This will affect approximately 500 residents.
- The amended emergency declaration established a 1900 EST curfew.
- Response, air and water monitoring continued through 1 December 2012 and 2 December 2012 and evacuation orders remained in effect.

- At 0600 3 December 2012 the incident site reported elevated readings of vinyl chloride that caused the evacuation of all workers in the area.
- At 0630 EST 3 December 2012 established water curtain was left in place and unmanned: All personnel at the site were staged at Paulsboro PD.
- At 0630 EST 3 December 2012 a decision was made for all Paulsboro residents to shelter in place.
- A message to the residents was sent via reverse 911 and through the media.
- All public schools in Paulsboro are closed including two (2) private schools: Head Start and Guardian Angels, in Paulsboro.
- It is believed that the weather conditions (fog) are the cause for the elevated readings and why the decision was made to shelter in place.
- The expectation is the readings will go down once the sun is up and the fog burns off.
- Further discussion will occur this afternoon as to the possibility of expanding the mandatory evacuation area this evening because of the continuing fog conditions occurring overnight and in the early morning.

C. RESOURCES DEPLOYED/REQUESTED

One crane is on scene and a larger crane is en route.

D. ACTIVITIES

State/Allied Agencies:

- NJSP Emergency Response Bureau-South: SFC Everingham and Tpr. Godish are on scene.
- NJSP Hazardous Material Response Unit
- NJSP Incident Management Unit
- United States Environmental Protection Agency
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- United States Coast Guard: Atlantic Strike Team

Counties:

- Gloucester County Office of Emergency Management
- Gloucester County Prosecutors Office
 - Gloucester County HazMat
 - Paulsboro Police Department
- Paulsboro Fire Department

Private Sector:

- Conrail: Funding all evacuation costs related to the event.

E. WEATHER FORECAST

Today: Patchy fog before 10am. Mostly cloudy, gradually becoming sunny, with a high near 63. Calm wind. Tonight: Increasing clouds with a low of 49. Calm wind.

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