

Independent Expert Predicts East Palestine OH Train Derailment Chemical Release Deaths May Become Worse Than 9/11

Independent expert analyses of the chemicals in the railcars, and their subsequent fire, following the train derailment in East Palestine Ohio identified over 100 highly toxic chemicals that have the potential to result in long-term medical injuries and environmental contamination. Dr. George Thompson, a toxicologist with over 50 years experience in chemical hazard assessments, published 21 books on hazardous chemicals, and served as an expert witness in 52 cases, predicts the long-term human health effects from this accident may be worse than occurred from 9/11. The fire potentially released 500-1,000 tons of highly toxic soot, ash, and hazardous chemicals into a massive smoke and mushroom cloud that slowly dissipated hundreds of miles beyond the derailment area contaminating farmland, animals, and communities in perhaps 5 different states.

Recent reports have stated that the delayed deaths for firefighters from 9/11 will shortly surpass accumulated deaths since 9/11. Dr. Thompson fears that similar delayed deaths from the East Palestine chemical release will accrue in eastern Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland and possibly Delaware. One of the railcar chemicals has been detected at low levels in the Ohio River bordering West Virginia, and "pollen" dust, that contained "some soil particles," was observed in Eastern West Virginia, particularly Berkeley and Washington Counties, in West Minister Maryland, and on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The impact of soot/ash chemical contaminants on farmland across these states remains unknown.

Of the 52 railcars identified in the Norfolk Southern manifest, 27 cars contained 12 different chemicals, and 8 cars contained 4 petroleum products. The precise identification of the railcars burned in the subsequent derailment fire is still awaiting clarification from Norfolk Southern. Of the railcar chemicals, eight cause cancer, allergies, and aquatic toxicity in the rivers. However, the number of additional toxic chemicals released by the fire included nearly 100 that cause cancer, 65 that produce brain/central nervous system effects, 45 that cause heart disease, 42 that cause lung toxicity, 22 that cause asthma, and 11 that cause reproductive effects. The potential human health and environmental hazards from the chemicals released by the fire far exceeded hazards from the railcar contents themselves. Dr. Thompson indicated that a question remains regarding the geographic area of concern, since the massive mushroom cloud created from the fire, and observed from space, would have impacted an area far greater than the community of East Palestine Ohio.

Shortly after the fire began, local citizens experienced health effects that persist now, six weeks after the initial incident. One woman and her husband, for example, experienced nose, eye, throat, larynx, and lung irritation within hours after the fire started. They have continued to suffer severe coughing and wheezing for the past six weeks, and still do not see an end to their injuries. Another East Palestine resident recently removed and folded his outdoor U.S. flag. Within hours, he developed a severe rash from the dust that had been on his flag. Residents must continue to be diligent about NOT vacuuming any dust in or around their homes or vehicles, since the vacuum exhaust will again spread the contaminated dust leading to another round of skin, eye, nose, throat and lung irritation and absorption.

Within hours after the fire ignition, animals in the greater area of East Palestine were killed. Five chickens raised 10 miles northwest of East Palestine died within hours. One fox near East

Palestine died, and several others became sick. Dozens of frogs and hundreds of fish in local streams died from the contamination. Cows in Pennsylvania reportedly developed diarrhea, and at least one railcar chemical was reportedly detected at levels below those of concern in the West Virginia Ohio River, approximately 265 miles south of East Palestine. A local farmer that raises pigs was unable to sell his pigs at market- they did not want any livestock from the area of exposure.

Dr. Thompson stated, "this train derailment and chemical release by the fire is the most complex and hazardous chemical release accident I have seen in my 50 years of experience as a toxicologist. My greatest fear is that cumulative long-term health effects across a broad cross section of the Atlantic States will progressively result in thousands of deaths from cancer, heart, kidney, and lung diseases over the next 10-20 years that could potentially exceed those from 9/11."