



Coffee Break Training - Hazardous Materials

Petroleum Crude Oil: Preincident Planning

No. HM-2014-3 November 3, 2014

Learning Objective: The student will be able to explain the key preincident planning considerations for crude oil rail transportation incidents and the key elements of a railroad emergency response plan.

Preincident planning is a key component of any successful response operation, especially in the case of a crude oil rail transportation incident. Emergency responders should determine the rail carriers of hazardous materials moving through their communities and ascertain if crude oil is one of the products being transported. This can be accomplished by contacting the individual rail carrier and requesting a list of the hazardous commodities transported through the community via the Association of American Railroads (AAR) Circular No. OT-55 protocol. This information is of assistance in the preparation of emergency response plans and procedures. A copy of the latest version of AAR Circular No. OT-55 and other related hazardous materials reference materials can be downloaded at <http://www.boe.aar.com/boe-download.htm>.

Railroads have extensive emergency response functions that work in cooperation with federal, state and local governments to assist communities in the event of an incident involving crude oil or other hazardous materials. All the major railroads have teams of full-time personnel whose primary focus is hazmat safety and emergency response, as well as teams of environmental, industrial hygiene and medical professionals available at all times to provide assistance during hazmat incidents.

Railroads also maintain networks of hazmat response contractors and environmental consultants, strategically located throughout their service areas, who can handle virtually any air, water, waste or public health issue. These contractors, who are on-call at all times, have multiple offices and equipment storage locations and a vast array of monitoring equipment, containment booms, industrial pumps, and other spill response tools and equipment. These resources are available to emergency responders by contacting the appropriate 24-hour emergency contact number for the railroad, which should be listed in the organization's emergency response plan. Tests and drills should be conducted to exercise the plan at regular intervals to identify any issues that might require corrective action prior to an actual incident.

Organizations should include a railroad annex in their emergency response plan that specifically addresses crude oil rail transportation emergency response operations. This annex should include:

- Hazard analysis that identifies the potential risks to people and property.
- Emergency contact lists.
- Resource listings.
- Equipment inventories.
- Foam and water supply requirements for operations at remote sites.
- Incident Management System roles and responsibilities.
- Mutual-aid response assets.
- Law enforcement scene security and control operations.
- Support and recovery assets.

Emergency responders should contact and engage the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) and Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) within their jurisdiction. SERCs and LEPCs can be valuable resources in obtaining information concerning the hazardous commodities being transported through the community, such as crude oil, as well as providing assistance with emergency planning, preparedness and response activities. LEPCs and emergency responders can seek planning information and commodity-specific training at www.TRANSCAER.com and select a state or region to determine the designated contacts.

Additional informational materials for first responders to better prepare them to respond to a crude oil rail transportation incident can be downloaded at <http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/hazmat/osd/emergencyresponse>.



Preincident planning and coordination with the railroad and other agencies are essential for a safe and effective response to a crude oil rail transportation incident.

For archived downloads, go to:

www.usfa.fema.gov/training/coffee_break/