

Train

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BNSF officials are working to restore rail service, said spokeswoman Amy McBeth. "The estimated time for opening the track is 10 p.m. on Tuesday," she told the *Press & Dakotan*.

The rail company is committed to keep traffic flowing as smoothly as possible, she said.

"When an incident like this happens, we can reroute traffic with relative ease, which is what has been occurring for shipments originally scheduled through this corridor," she said. "Customers may experience delays of 24-48 hours on shipments through the corridor."

THE CIRCUMSTANCES

Meanwhile, more details on the derailment and fire were released Sunday.

The involved cars were located at the front of the train, according to Bon Homme County emergency

management spokesman Lee Rettig.

"The train was coming from the northwest to the southeast," he said. "They were apparently not carrying ethanol from (the POET plant in) Scotland."

BNSF railroad personnel and derailment contractors continue their cleanup and reconstruction effort at the site southeast of Scotland, Rettig said.

Investigators from the NTSB and officials with the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are on site, trying to determine the cause and impact of the crash.

"Work at the site continued overnight (into Sunday morning)," Rettig said. "Crews removed ethanol remaining in the derailed cars and prepared to replace the bridge destroyed by fire in the wreck."

Local first responders from Bon Homme and Yankton counties, including fire and emergency management

services (EMS) personnel and both counties' Office of Emergency Management, continued supporting the recovery effort Sunday.

BNSF fire and hazardous material response teams arrived on scene around 11 a.m. Saturday, Rettig said. The local response effort was led by the Scotland Fire Department and firefighters from Lesterville, Menno, Tabor and Tyndall. The South Dakota Highway Patrol and the Bon Homme County Sheriff's Office were also on the scene.

FIGHTING THE FIRE

Scotland Fire Chief Mike Mehrer said conditions were somewhat challenging at first.

"The fog was thick as soup. We had to make sure we got the right directions (to the derailment)," he said. "(The incident) happened in a creek, so it wasn't real visible."

Once arriving on the scene, firefighters saw a number of factors in their favor, Mehrer said.

"Everything clicked," he

said. "The fire was 300 or 400 feet from the road. We had a wet (season) and there wasn't pasture (on fire). There was a corn field right next to it, but we didn't have to battle flames in a corn field. The only thing that burned up was in the creek. There was heavy air, but it wasn't windy."

Rettig agreed on the fortunate set of circumstances, including the nearest home a half-mile away.

Based on the massive fire and the ethanol, the decision was made to allow the ethanol fire to burn out rather than attack it with water, Mehrer said. The decision was made after a consultation with other firefighters and emergency managers Scott Burgi of Bon Homme County and Paul Scherschligt of Yankton County.

"We decided to let the ethanol burn because there would be no mess afterwards because it burns clean," Mehrer said.

"The guys from the EPA told me (afterwards) it was the right thing to do. The EPA said the natural instinct is to spray water on

a fire, and a lot of people told me the right thing to do is just let it burn itself out."

Fighting the fire would have required a tremendous amount of water, Rettig said.

"The BNSF estimated they would need 50,000 gallons of water to put this (fire) out and cool down the tanks," he said. "Each tanker would hold 2,000 to 2,500 gallons of water, so you can imagine the tankers it would take to get the job done."

The local firefighters benefited from recent training on ethanol fires offered at the POET ethanol plant in Scotland, Mehrer said.

Saturday's fire started to let up by 10 a.m. that morning, and the BNSF team brought things under final control shortly after arriving about an hour later. The team carried expertise in fighting the fire, including the use of special foam, he said.

"They (BNSF) had a plan and knew what they were doing," the fire chief said. "Their big concern was cooling things down."

Mehrer said he welcomed

the BNSF team's special knowledge.

"One thing, I've been fire chief for seven months," he said. "I know that you welcome advice from those who know what they are doing, and they were doing the right thing. It was mind-boggling how quick they had (control of the fire) done."

The derailment and fire also brought the response of a number of government agencies, Mehrer said. "They had every letter of the alphabet, including EPA, DENR and those types of agencies," he said.

Firefighters remained on scene until 2:30 p.m. Sunday before being released, Rettig said. The bridge over the creek has been destroyed, but traffic remains normal on Highways 25 and 46, he said.

More information may be released in the coming days, Rettig said. "For now, the NTSB is handling the information," he said.

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National Farm Safety Week

September 20-26, 2015

These local businesses care about the health and safety of the farmers, ranchers and agricultural workers in our area. As we recognize National Farm Safety and Health Week, please take a moment to review these simple tips designed to protect your health and safety while on the job.

- Stay alert, and be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Never allow extra riders on machinery. No seat, no rider!
- Never attempt to unplug equipment when power is engaged.
- Carry a fire extinguisher on each piece of powered equipment.
- Designate a safe play area for kids that is a safe distance from machinery.

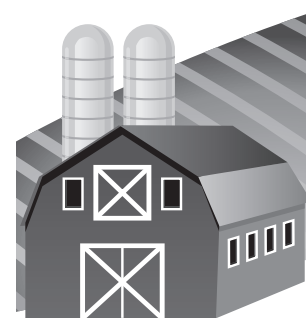
Clean produce properly to avoid contaminants

more than 10 pounds of insecticides and herbicides every year from produce. Many of these substances are proven carcinogens. Thoroughly washing and soaking fresh produce is the key to removing potential hazards from foods. Organic fruits and vegetables may be less risky, but even organic foods are susceptible to contamination because of potentially unsafe handling practices.

All produce should be washed before eaten. Before cleaning produce, stock up on a few supplies. You will need a large plastic bowl, some apple cider vinegar or baking soda and a produce brush. Add enough cool water to cover the produce you will be washing. Add either three tablespoons per gallon of water of the vinegar to the bowl or sprinkle about three tablespoons of the baking soda into the water. It's best not to mix both the vinegar and the baking soda, or you may end up with a foaming, overflowing concoction thanks to the chemical reaction that occurs when vinegar mixes with baking soda.

Add the vegetables or fruit to the treated water and allow it to soak for around 10 minutes. Use a vegetable brush to thoroughly scrub the produce. Some foods, like celery and lettuce, have dirt or bugs trapped in their ribs and folds. Soaking and scrubbing can dislodge any bugs. Instead of washing the entire head at once, wash lettuce leaves as they are used to retain the vitamins and minerals.

It is best to wash produce right before using it rather than washing it in advance. Moisture encourages bacterial growth and hasten spoiling. Even foods that have a rind, such as melons, should be washed prior to eating to avoid contamination from the rind to the flesh inside.



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