



City of New Franklin
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PAUL F. ADAMSON, MAYOR

East Palestine, Ohio Train Derailment

February 17, 2023

On February 3, a Norfolk Southern freight train carrying vinyl chloride derailed in East Palestine, Ohio, approximately 55 miles east of New Franklin. On February 6, in an effort to avoid an explosion, railroad and state authorities began a controlled release and burn of the vinyl chloride. Both Summit County Public Health and the Summit County Executive's Office have confirmed that the Greater Akron area has not been affected by the release of the hazardous materials. County Executive Ilene Shapiro stated that our water supply and air quality are tested daily, and there is no indication that either has been impacted by the events in East Palestine.

Because New Franklin is located in the very northern part of the Ohio River Watershed (the same watershed in which East Palestine is located), our water flows south to the Ohio River. With our location being northwest of the incident, the risk of contamination from the accident in East Palestine is extremely low but is continuing to be tested. Additionally, Summit County Public Health reports that the air pollution from the event was transported to the south and east by the winds. New Franklin has not been environmentally impacted by the pollutants locally, and our residents do not need to take any action at this time.

New Franklin Fire Chief Steve Leslie, Executive Board Member for the Summit County Special Operations Response Team, has spoken with the Branch Director for hazardous materials who confirmed there are no concerns for Summit County at this time. Chief Leslie and City Administration will continue to work with Summit County Public Health, the County Executive's office, the Ohio EPA and Governor DeWine's office and pass along any actionable steps to our residents if necessary. At this time, there has been no indication of a need for testing of the Portage Lakes, but in the event the need for testing is indicated, ODNR will work with the Ohio EPA and the environmental company hired by Norfolk Southern to conduct testing. The City and the public will be made aware if and when that happens.

For more information on the events, weather/rain runoff, air monitoring, and testing, the latest updates from Governor DeWine are available at <https://governor.ohio.gov/>. Information on the cleanup process, contact phone numbers, FAQs, water and air sampling information can be found at <https://ema.ohio.gov/eastpalestine>. Citizen calls about the incident can be directed to Lisa Cochran at the Ohio EPA at 614-644-2160.

Any resident wanting to get their water tested in an abundance of caution should feel free to do so (at their own expense). A list of certified and accepted laboratories to perform analyses on public drinking water can be found on the Summit County Public Health website (scph.org).