

## **Dangerous and Dirty - Oil Trains!**

**Philadelphia is in the crosshairs.** Three times a day mile-long trains carry dangerous Bakken Shale crude oil into Philadelphia and the volumes are expanding. Philadelphia is at risk every day due to the danger of pollution, accidents and explosion from oil trains.

**The tank cars are substandard and prone to explode when derailed.** The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) found that DOT-111 tank cars, the most commonly used, puncture easily when derailed, often exploding. The newer cars, CPC 1232s, have recently exploded as well, making it clear that no tank cars being used today are safe. Here in Philadelphia, we wouldn't have time to get away from an explosion and millions of dollars in devastating damages could occur.

**The oil is highly volatile and flammable, more likely to catch fire.** Federal agencies say Bakken crude oil has unusually high gas content, low flash point, a low boiling point and high vapor pressure, risking catastrophic fire that is difficult or impossible to extinguish. Yet these trains roll through our neighborhoods and up against our water supplies as if their cargo was benign.

**Accidents abound.** As crude-by-rail traffic has increased, so have accidents, posing significant risks to life, property and the environment – 113 incidents involving crude-by-rail mishaps occurred in 2013. The most devastating was in Lac Megantic, Quebec where 47 people died and much of the town was blown up. Rushed expansion has largely ignored public safety concerns and pollution consequences.

**A Philadelphia catastrophe could be next.** Philadelphia had a near disaster when a train derailed in January 2014. Tank cars carrying crude oil from a CSX train hung over the Schuylkill River for days, threatening the City and the water supply of 1.5 million residents. We dodged a bullet that time, by luck. On Jan. 31 of this year 11 tank cars derailed in the CSX rail yard between I-95 and the Delaware River, across from the stadium; there has been a news blackout about how and why this occurred and the effects. Why is there no public accountability?

**Hundreds of thousands of residents and workers are within the ½ mile evacuation zone.** Philadelphia's rail tracks and bridges are old and run right up against communities, businesses, the rivers and public spaces. In addition, City Hall and millions of people are threatened by air and water pollution and other fallout should an oil train catastrophe occur. There are hundreds of thousands of people within the blast zone of the train tracks in Philadelphia. For an eye-opening interactive map to see how close you are: <http://explosive-crude-by-rail.org/>

**Oil train traffic is increasing – the danger has just begun.** Crude-by-rail trains loaded with Bakken crude are forecasted to increase as refineries and terminals expand here on the Delaware River. Philadelphia Energy Solutions (PES) in Philadelphia is the largest oil refining complex on the Eastern Seaboard, the largest crude oil rail yard in the U.S., and the largest single customer for crude oil produced from North Dakota's Bakken Shale, processing at least 350,000 barrels of oil per day (bpd). PES, Monroe Refinery in Delaware County, PBF Refinery in Paulsboro, NJ, and the refinery at Delaware City, DE are together refining 862,000 bpd. PES is reportedly increasing its oil refinery production this year, which is expected to increase crude-

by-rail traffic in Philadelphia. Bakken Shale oil production is expected to continue to increase from 1 million barrels of oil per day (MMb/d) to approx.1.4 MMb/d by 2016.

**Crude oil pollutes and Bakken crude releases polluting volatile organic compounds (VOCs).** According to PHMSA, more than 1.15 million gallons of crude oil was spilled from rail cars in over 35 tank car accidents in 2013, which is more oil than was spilled in the prior 37 years combined. Higher gas content in Bakken crude oil means more air pollution and methane where the oil is fracked in North Dakota, more VOCs at refineries and terminals like we have here on the Delaware River, and greater risk of leaked VOCs through the substandard tank car fittings as they travel 1400 miles across the half the nation.

**We can't wait for the Feds.** No substantial changes have been made yet that make a derailment less likely to occur again in Philadelphia and there is nothing to prevent a catastrophic accident similar to those that are occurring along the routes these dangerous trains travel. Recently proposed changes to federal regulations allow substandard tank cars to continue to be used and don't provide needed safety measures.

**The City needs to improve emergency response planning to these bomb trains.** People don't know about these trains that can explode like bombs, even though they see them rumble by every day. Philadelphia City Council can take action that will help protect Philadelphians, to improve safety and help prevent a full blown disaster.

**City Council should adopt the Proposed Resolution.** Councilmen Kenyatta Johnson and Curtis Jones have supported the urgently needed protection of City residents from these dirty and dangerous oil trains. Councilman Johnson has introduced a resolution sounding the alarm on the unsafe tank cars being used and the lack of public knowledge and emergency preparedness. We call on City Council to adopt the Resolution to Protect Philadelphia from the impacts of crude-by-rail. We propose a Resolution to City Council that calls for an immediate ban on all presently used tank cars; no expansion of oil transport without comprehensive safety analyses and full implementation of maximum safety measures in equipment and operations; voluntary restrictions by carriers on crude oil transport through Philadelphia; and the update of emergency response planning, including increased public participation.

**City Council needs to develop a Green Energy Economy—it's time for a transition.** City Council needs to recognize the crucial importance of and champion the development of clean, renewable, sustainable, and energy efficient energy sources and stable economic engines that will support the health and longevity of our communities and the water, air, and natural assets that provide the quality and security the region requires to truly thrive and grow.

**For more information:**

**The Philadelphia Fossil Fuel Transport Working Group**

Clean Water Action, 215-545-0250 [www.cleanwateraction.org/pa](http://www.cleanwateraction.org/pa)

Delaware Riverkeeper Network, 215-369-1188 [www.delawareriverkeeper.org](http://www.delawareriverkeeper.org)

Protecting Our Waters, [www.protectingourwaters.com](http://www.protectingourwaters.com), [protectingourwaters@gmail.com](mailto:protectingourwaters@gmail.com)

Sierra Club Beyond Natural Gas, (717) 232-0101, <http://content.sierraclub.org/beyondoil/dirty-fuels>

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