

Emo, Ontario (2020)

Location: Emo, Ontario

File Number: 1201-05

TSB Investigation Number: R20W0031

The Accident

According to the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) report, on February 18, 2020, a Canadian National Railway (CN) train heading eastward on the CN Fort Frances Subdivision experienced a train-initiated emergency brake application at Mile 108.22 near Emo, Ontario. TSB confirmed that 31 cars derailed, of which 27 carried petroleum crude oil. Five of the derailed crude oil cars released an estimated 210 000 litres of petroleum crude oil.

Damages

No injuries were reported. However, as a precaution, the town of Emo evacuated residents from six homes. No fires or impacts to waterways were reported.

CN's environmental team led the clean-up.

The TSB report lists the suspected cause of the derailment to be faulty track infrastructure, coupled with weather conditions at the time of the incident. As a result, CN has mandated that crews performing inspections on a single rail must also inspect both rails at the same time for any faults.

Measures Taken by the Administrator

The Administrator's office reached out to CN's Claims Department, who predicted that the damages incurred from the incident would not likely utilize CN's insurance.

The Fund for Railway Accidents Involving Designated Goods (the Fund) consulted available reporting from the TSB's Rail Transportation Safety Investigations database. Based on the available data and the extent of damages resulting from the accident, it is most unlikely that the Fund will be triggered for compensation purposes.

Status

The TSB closed this file and published their report on 28 July 2020. This report can be found on the TSB website. However, we will continue to monitor this accident until the six-year time limit for claiming against the railway company expires in February 2026.