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## **CCNJ RAIL SAFETY TASKFORCE MEETS TO SHARE LESSONS LEARNED & REGULATORY FOCUS ON CRUDE RAIL SHIPMENTS**

In late March, the Chemistry Council's Rail Safety Taskforce held its first meeting of 2014 and continued its mission to work to improve New Jersey's system of emergency response, and expand the knowledge, relationships, and communication between emergency responders, local government officials, rail partners, and the chemical industry. The meeting focused on initial lessons learned from a recent joint table top rail incident exercise between Salem and Gloucester Counties and a discussion of the continued regulatory focus on crude oil rail shipments.

The bulk of the meeting dealt with a review and discussion of the table top exercise held at the Salem County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) complex on March 8. Members from CCNJ's Rail Taskforce attended the exercise, including Linton Henderson (DuPont), Steve Chranowski (CCNJ), Tony Dias (Kuehne), Janet Ferris (Axeon), Chuck McCann (Lubrizol), and Mike Morrison (Oxy Vinyl). The scenario used for the exercise was an accident caused by a vehicle that crashed into a railcar transporting chlorine, resulting in a significant chlorine leak and response effort with cross county communication from Salem and Gloucester Counties. The exercise tested preparedness for evacuations, shelter in place orders, as well as emergency response due to inhalation toxicity of chlorine.

This training exercise was part of an initiative organized to expand communication between federal, state, and local agencies, rail partners and industry to drill on incident command control, public protection, control and containment of products, and the dissemination of public information. The drill also was designed to stress the need for the initial emergency responders in operations to ask for assistance from Incident Command in setting up logistics and planning. The drill demonstrated the importance of utilizing available resources and communication. CCNJ utilized this opportunity to develop a relationship with Conrail, which has committed to setting up a similar exercise in Middlesex County or North Jersey in the third quarter.

The regulatory focus on crude rail shipments, which has increased by 400 percent since 2005, was also discussed at the latest meeting. The NTSB is making recommendations to ensure that tank head and shell are more puncture resistant on crude rail cars due to poor performance of the DOT-111 tank cars in past events in Casselton, ND and in Canada. No legislation or rules have been passed at this point. The NTSB is also asking the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and US Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to develop an audit program to ensure rail carriers that carry petroleum products have adequate response capabilities to handle worst case discharges of the crude trains. Finally, NTSB is pushing to audit shippers and rail carriers to ensure that they are properly classifying hazardous materials in transportation and have adequate safety and security plans.

In addition to expanding the knowledge base of our state's emergency responders, rail partners and the chemistry industry, the taskforce is working to develop a simple resource guide for the initial emergency response on rail issues in New Jersey.

At the meeting, the new TRANSCAER training dates were announced for New Jersey and Connecticut, which include two stops in North Jersey: South Kearny on May 12th and 13<sup>th</sup>, and Port Reading from May 21-23. The training topics will include: general awareness for non-responders; rail car anatomy; capping kits (Midland and C-Kit); responding to TIH/FG emergencies; leak mitigation; tank truck emergencies; and chlorine emergencies. You can access more information about the TRANSCAER events via CCNJ's website at <http://www.chemistrycouncilnj.org/Events/TRANSCAER-NJ-TOUR.aspx>.

Representatives from member companies interested in joining the Rail Safety Taskforce are encouraged to contact Steve Chranowski or Tom Leach.

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