

Derailment raises safety concerns for Montgomery residents

CTV Saskatoon

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For many people in Saskatoon's Montgomery Place and Fairhaven neighbourhoods a weekend train derailment and disruptions were the final straw.

Both CN and CP trains run in the area and residents say they're fed up and want changes made before a more serious incident happens.

Five CN railcars carrying grain derailed Friday night near 11th Street. No one was injured but the cars spilled some of the grain they were carrying.

The next morning Marilyn Person sighted the wreckage from her balcony next to the tracks. Person says she sees trains running here day and night, often hauling oil tanker cars.

She believes it was only a matter of time before there was a derailment and says its lucky all they were carrying was grain.

"Oh, it's scary if there were tanker cars. That's what my neighbours and me are always talking about," she said.

On Saturday on Circle Drive in the same area CP Rail's crossing gates malfunctioned.

Montgomery Place resident Gavin Cranmer-Sargison says he was trapped on the 11th Street exit for more than an hour while the gates stayed down. He's says situations like raise concerns about emergency response times and access in and out of his neighbourhood.

"As a resident of Montgomery we need to know that there is going to be timely response, because there is a situation where if both lines are blocked, there is no access to our neighbourhood," Cranmer-Sargison said.

Pat Lorje, the city councillor for Ward 2 that includes Montgomery, says she's been fighting to improve access to the neighbourhood since the completion of the Circle Drive South project. She says reinstating the level crossing at Dundonald Avenue or building a fly over across 11th Street are good solutions.

"It is my understanding that the community was promised that there would be access but clearly there is not access now," Lorje said.

Lorje says she has asked senior city officials to come up with a workable solution to the access issue, and plans to keep lobbying the city until something is done.