

Cleanup continues at derailment site

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HAMILTON TOWNSHIP - Nearly a month after a local train derailment, crews are still cleaning up the area.

On March 27, more than 20 cars on a westbound CN train derailed south of County Road 2, just east of the Municipality of Port Hope in Hamilton Township.

Some of the rail cars were carrying hazardous contents.

After approximately one week, most of the cars were cut up by heavy machinery and taken away.

But cleanup from the spill is ongoing.

As of last week, CN Rail still would not allow press near the vicinity of the cleanup to view the progress, but did issue a statement concerning whether heavy rains recently have caused delays in the cleanup.

"Several proactive measures have been implemented at the site to prevent any remaining material from spreading as a result of rainfall in the area," CN spokesperson Lindsay Fedchyshyn stated in an e-mail.

A 250-foot collection trench has been installed along the

north side of the track to collect water and any potential product. Monitoring wells have also been installed and are being monitored regularly to detect any potential presence of product.

Mobile pumping units / vacuums trucks are at the site, pumping and containing water. Oil / water separators have also been installed in the ditches to prevent any spread of liquid.

"We continue to work closely with provincial environmental officials and will keep them informed as work progresses," Fedchyshyn stated.

Previously Fedchyshyn said CN Rail has recovered most of the fuel; "however, the recovered fuel mixed with water and we are calculating the exact amount."

Ministry of Environment officials stated 67,000 litres of aviation fuel were recovered, while 73,000 to 133,000 litres of jet fuel was unaccounted for.

Environment Ministry spokesperson Michel Finn stated, "our job is to make sure the environment is protected and that anyone responsible for a spill takes the steps needed to clean it up and not adversely impact the environment.

"The recent rains have not impacted the clean up work and the wetland and pond area have been cleaned up and restored.

"The spill has not impacted local drinking water and potential impacts to soil and groundwater are being appropriately addressed."

Finn said the ministry is "satisfied" with the cleanup work.

Neither CN Rail nor the Ministry of Environment has advised how much longer cleanup efforts would take.

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