

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Media Statement in Response to the NTSB Final Board Hearing

EAST PALESTINE, OHIO – June 25, 2024 – In response to the National Transportation Safety Board’s (NTSB) final board meeting on the 2023 East Palestine, Ohio train derailment on June 25, 2024, the Village is issuing the following response.

As the NTSB found, neither the East Palestine fire chief nor Governor DeWine were made aware of the recommendations of OxyVinyl during the vent and burn decision-making process. Incident command is unable to make fully informed decisions when information is withheld. The Village of East Palestine agrees with the NTSB’s recommendation that improved and more complete communications from all experts to the incident command surrounding the vent and burn decision were needed to enable incident command to make a fully informed decision.

As this derailment has further shown and as the NTSB found, volunteer firefighters respond to the same fires as career firefighters, but with a fraction of the training. All village volunteer firefighters have at least the state minimum training. And as the NTSB further found, each and every first responder at the derailment did the best they could under extraordinarily challenging circumstances. This was evident by the fact that there was no loss of life and damage to property was minimal. Still, the village supports the NTSB’s recommendation that the state of Ohio update Ohio’s voluntary firefighter certification standards. The Village looks forward to the increased support and resources that must be made available to volunteer departments, including hazardous materials training, in order to implement the NTSB’s recommendations.

The village also agrees with the NTSB’s finding that the delay in obtaining the train consist presented significant challenges to first responders and the East Palestine fire department and supports the NTSB’s recommendation to require consists to be provided immediately to first responders.

The village continues to express its gratitude to all first responders and officials who were involved in this incident. We continue to stand by the East Palestine Fire Chief and all our volunteer members of the East Palestine Fire Department; by the East Palestine Police Chief James Brown, and his officers; to the village's other first responders, and to all first responders from many other departments in the region who came to the village’s aid. Their training, professionalism, and commitment to saving lives were truly evident and an honor to their professions.

The full NTSB report will be available in the coming weeks. For more information, visit [ntsb.gov](https://www.ntsb.gov).

About the Village of East Palestine

Founded in 1875, the Village of East Palestine is a close-knit community known for its rich history, friendly atmosphere, and commitment to progress. With a population of just under 5,000 residents, the Village of East Palestine offers a unique blend of small-town charm and modern conveniences, making it an ideal place to live, work, and visit. Learn more at [epohio.org](https://www.epohio.org)

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