

# FACT SHEET | Improving Rail Safety

*Building a Better Minnesota*

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Every day, trains carrying oil and other hazardous materials pass through Minnesota. These trains present serious risks to public safety and our natural resources. In December 2013, an oil train in Casselton, North Dakota exploded – forcing 1,400 residents to evacuate. And last July, an oil train from North Dakota derailed and exploded in Quebec, Canada – killing 42 people and destroying 30 buildings.

This year, Governor Dayton and the Legislature worked to strengthen Minnesota’s ability to prevent disasters, and respond quickly and effectively if they do occur. By improving safety precautions and disaster preparedness, these efforts will improve the safety of Minnesotans living near railroads carrying hazardous materials.

## Strengthening Safety Requirements

- **Prevention Plans Required.** The safety legislation signed by Governor Dayton requires railroad companies to submit disaster prevention plans. This new law will require companies transporting hazardous materials to develop safety measures that help keep Minnesotans safe.
- **Increased Safety Inspections.** The legislation signed by the Governor also increases the number of railway inspectors at the Minnesota Department of Transportation, which will be paid for with an annual assessment on railroad companies.

## Improving Disaster Response Readiness

- **Emergency Response Training.** The legislation signed into law by the Governor requires railroads to offer emergency response training every three years to every fire department located along the oil train routes. By increasing training opportunities, this measure will help ensure Minnesota firefighters are prepared to respond to a disaster.
- **Planning Emergency Responses.** The rail safety provisions signed by Governor Dayton require railroads to file emergency response plans with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The new law also requires them to keep these plans updated. This is paid for through an assessment on railroads and pipelines.
- **Improving Response Capacity.** The new law additionally requires railroads to deploy enough equipment to clean up any spill or leak that might occur within a specified time period. This means that those who create disasters will be held responsible for cleaning them up.

## Rail Safety – By the Numbers

<b>100</b>	Oil trains with more than 100 cars passing through Minnesota each day
<b>30 Million</b>	Gallons of oil passing through our state on oil trains daily
<b>45</b>	Olympic-sized pools could be filled with oil from trains each day
<b>4,500</b>	Miles of rail track in Minnesota