



Customer Testimonial

A major rail transportation company

Rail Transportation Company Calls on ENPRO after Rail Car Incident

Another quick and thorough clean up by ENPRO



In May 2008, a major rail transportation company's environmental resources management team faced an urgent situation: an estimated 20,000 lbs of sodium chlorate, a strong oxidizing chemical, were released when a railroad tanker car struck another railcar as it traveled through a rail yard. The rail yard is located in an area surrounded by multi-family residences and is intersected by a heavily-used commuter rail system. Sodium chlorate spilled out of a large gash in the tanker, impacting the railroad tracks and underlying/adjacent areas over a length of more than ½ mile. The team immediately contacted ENPRO to enlist their expert assistance.

ENPRO responded quickly and thoroughly, with equipment, material and more than 20 scientists, chemists and skilled environmental technicians to address the release. ENPRO immediately became part of the Incident Command System and worked with

multiple local, state and federal agencies to assess site conditions and develop a clean-up plan. While there was no imminent danger to public safety, the freight lines and commuter rail had to be shut down until the tracks were cleared. Overnight, ENPRO removed the gross contamination quickly enough from the ½-mile length of track to prevent any strong oxidizing reaction (and subsequently any damage to the track and hundreds of staged railcars) and to allow the reopening of both the commuter rail and freight lines in time for the early morning commute. ENPRO's scientists and chemists then developed and implemented an approach to treat residual sodium chlorate in place on the tracks, to prevent the oxidizing chemical from causing small, spontaneous fires. The rapid initial response, and subsequent in-place treatment, facilitated the subsequent regulatory close-out of the site with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

The environmental manager of the railway took a few moments to share his thoughts on the project and overall experience with ENPRO.

What services did ENPRO provide to you?

During the incident at the rail yard, we hired ENPRO to remove the sodium chlorate and to subsequently neutralize the affected soil. Their work was quick and thorough and carried out in a most professional manner. Because of the location of the release (rail corridor in a mixed commercial and residential area) and the hot weather and resulting chemical combustions, ENPRO made this case a top priority.

What were the most positive aspects of your experience with ENPRO?

It was vital that the hazardous materials be cleaned up very quickly to enable continuous use of the railway. ENPRO completed the job with ease and made us feel they had everything under control.

How did you find the overall experience of working with ENPRO?

I received superior service dealing with the professionals working at ENPRO. Working with ENPRO was a great experience, and I'll be sure to call upon them again for any future environmental needs.

Services Provided

- Recovered the spilled sodium chlorate quickly before it could initiate a strong oxidizing reaction with railroad ties, oil-impacted ballast and soil, debris, and other organic matter on and adjacent to the tracks
- Cleaned the site sufficiently, within a matter of hours, to allow re-opening of the commuter rail and freight lines
- Safely secured, moved, and off-loaded the damaged railroad car to allow re-opening of the freight line followed by the removal of the remaining, non-impacted sodium chlorate cargo
- Managed the remediation waste, which included recovered sodium chlorate and incidental debris that could not be separated during clean-up