

LEADING THROUGH ADVERSITY *LESSONS LEARNED IN THE TRENCHES*

Director Anne Vogel
Ohio EPA



**Environmental
Protection
Agency**



Butech Bliss via Storyful
Salem, OH
February 3, 2023

The
Weather
Channel







FEBRUARY 6, 2023 - CONTROLLED BURN



2023-02-07 11:27:22
-80 52342 +40 83585

2-7-23



DJI 0227 W

OHIO EPA INITIAL RESPONSE

- Gov. DeWine & Ohio EPA leadership on-site the first weekend
- Embedded in the community for several months
- Initially Incident Command
- Unified Command established:
 - U.S. EPA, Ohio EPA, Columbiana County EMA, ODH, East Palestine, Norfolk Southern, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection, Pennsylvania Dept. of Health



OHIO EPA INQUIRIES

MEDIA CALLS

- First weekend: 7 calls
- 1 week out: 50 calls
- 2 weeks out: 188 calls
- 3 weeks out: 307

- 1 month after derailment: 402

CITIZEN INQUIRIES

- First weekend: 5 calls
- 1 week out: 24 calls
- 2 weeks out: 212 calls
- 3 weeks out: 314 calls

- 1 month after derailment: 362 calls



COMMS STRATEGY

- Reactive at first – had to be proactive
- Biggest challenge: Combating misinformation
- Able to call on resources from other agencies



OHIO EPA RESPONSE

- Created trackers for calls & common Q&A
- Uniform messaging
- Collaborated with ODOT on an electronic media center
 - Central media space
 - Video & pictures available to media
 - Daily newsletters
 - Interactive maps
 - [Story Map](#)

Ohio EPA / About Us / Media Center / Media Queries / East Palestine Train Derailment

Media Center

Welcome

News

Events

Access Public Records

Director's Testimony

Public Notices

Media Queries

East Palestine Train Derailment

Ohio EPA Media Center

We are receiving dozens of media inquires each day from local, state, and national outlets. It is important that reporters are able to access accurate information in a timely manner. We've created this page to help you do that.

News Releases

Media outlets have made multiple requests for interviews with our subject matter experts and leaders. These folks continue working hard to assist the people impacted by the derailment and may not always have availability to fulfill these requests. To ensure all media outlets get consistent and timely information, we will post raw interviews based on questions our communications staff is receiving. You can submit questions by emailing media@epa.ohio.gov.

We will also post raw b-roll video from media events and behind the scenes where media may not be able to attend in person. All of these materials are free and clear for unrestricted use by media outlets and the public.

Video



LESSONS LEARNED



- Be proactive – anticipate the media asks
- Be present and build relationships
- Transparency and credibility are critical
- Continued updates

QUESTIONS?





Partnering to Make A Difference

*Other Significant Incidents
in Ohio 2015-2024*

ER CHIEF ED GORTNER
OHIO EPA



Office of Emergency Response

Key Statewide ER Metrics

- Incidents in Past SFY
 - 2,121 Individual Spills Reported
 - 17% Non-emergency reports
 - 50% handled by locals following standard accepted field practices
 - More than 580,000 gallons of spilled liquids recovered and removed last year
- 12 On Scene Coordinators in the state
- 24/7 On Call – 4 OSCs On Call at any given time
- 30,000 hours of spill response last year
- Single point of entry is the Ohio EPA Spill Hotline **1-800-282-9378**

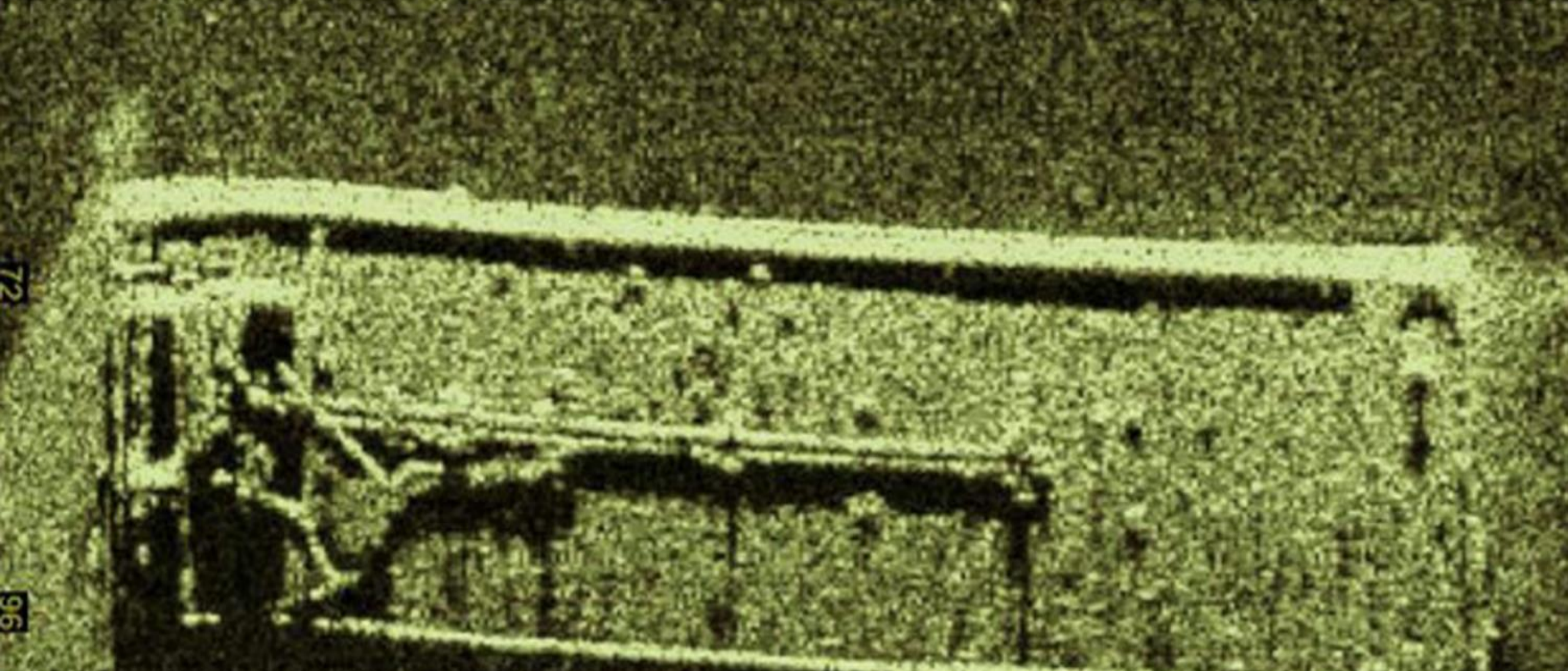


R & L Carriers 2022

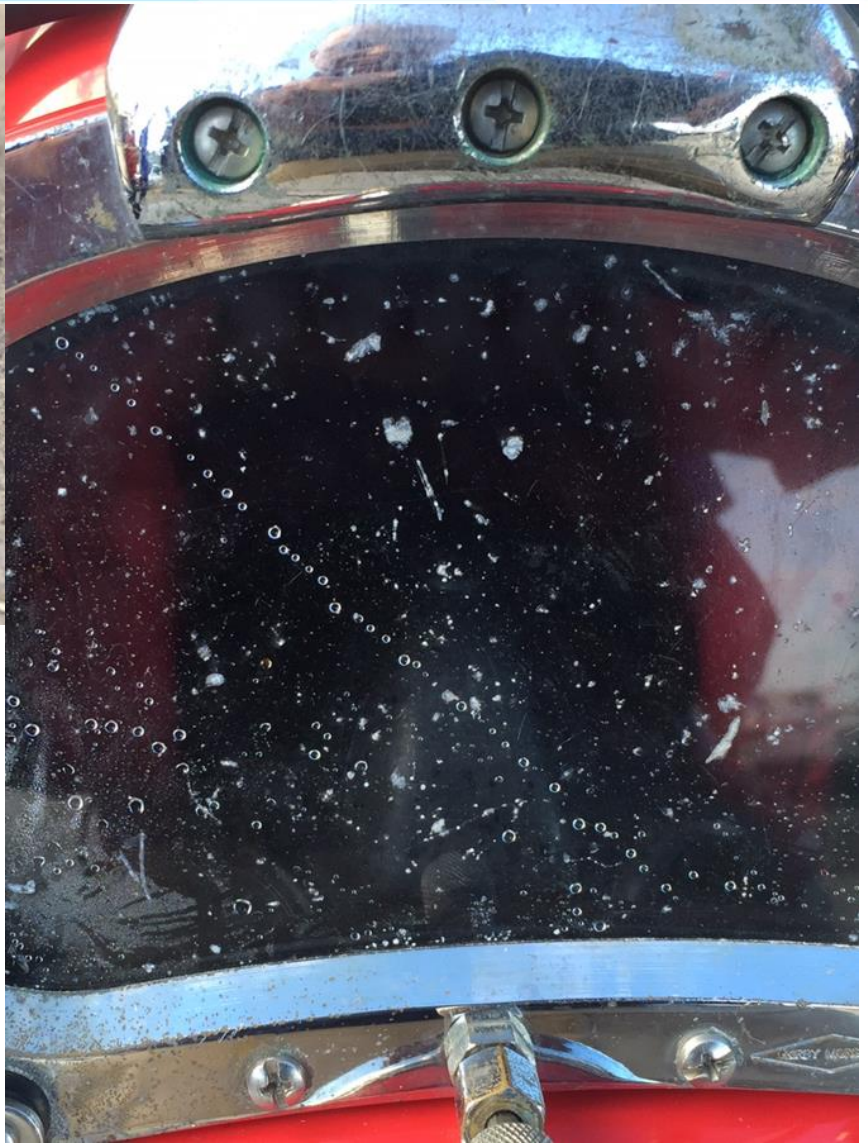


XTO Well Pad 2018



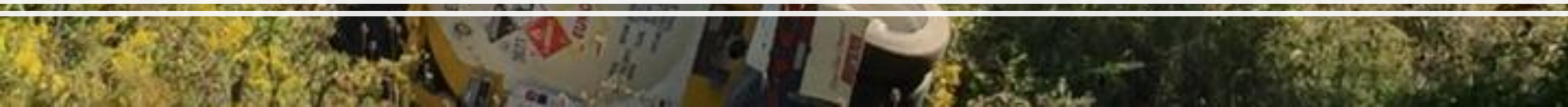


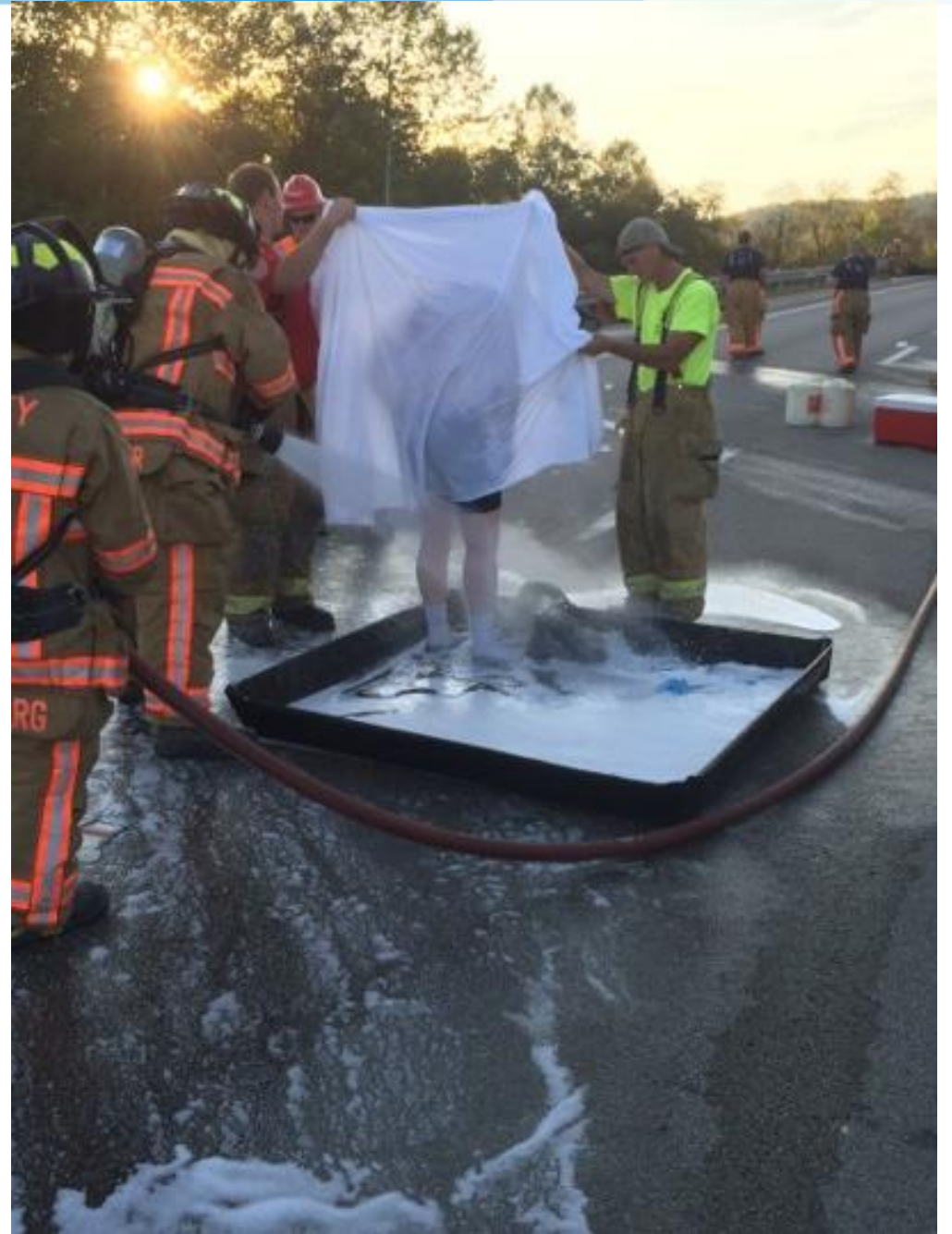
ARGO 2015





Jackson County Intermodel 2016







Rover Pipeline 2017





Tuscarawas Soap Dumping 2016



“NON-HAZARDOUS SPILLS”

- Any material in high enough concentrations and volumes can create toxicity and environmental harm
- Wheat, milk, corn, corn syrup, limestone fines, soap, beer, manure
- High oxygen demand in creeks and can cause massive fish kills



ROLE OF RESPONSE PARTNERSHIP

- Every Incident is unique and requires collaborative efforts among local law enforcement, road crews, fire personnel, County EMA with each focused on their roles to redress the emergency
- These partnerships produce success every single day in Ohio
- Unified partner goal is to be there and help someone get through a really bad day



QUESTIONS?
