As domestic oil production has increased, so has the shipment of crude oil by rail. The typical train carrying crude oil is over a mile long, consisting of 100 or more cars, each carrying 30,000 gallons of crude. Bakken crude oil accounts for much of this increased oil production and comes from a rock formation found in Montana, North Dakota, and the adjacent Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Derailments and incidents involving trains over a mile long carrying crude oil pose unique challenges for responding organizations since an incident may involve the release and or ignition of thousands of gallons of product.

- Responses to crude oil incidents may require specialized outside resources whose arrival will be delayed
- Derailments will likely require mutual aid and a more robust incident management system than responders would typically employ
- Crude oil is not a uniform substance and its chemical and physical properties can vary based on production site
- Traditional firefighting strategies and tactics may not be effective against crude oil because it contains flammable gasses

Given the unique challenges posed by a response to a crude oil derailment, the InterAgency Board Training & Exercises (T&E) SubGroup recommends that organizations:

1. **Review and update mutual aid agreements to account for the need to manage a derailment given the likelihood of road closures, significant detours, and the need to access the scene from more than one direction**
2. **Review format and process for resource requests in response to a crude oil incident**
3. **Update emergency operations and response plans to include 24 hour emergency numbers for all Class I railroads (see PHMSA table)**
4. **Develop a railroad annex for emergency operations and response plans including evacuation, control, transportation, and housing considerations**
5. **Include crude oil shippers and rail carriers in incident planning and exercises for their jurisdiction**
6. **Contact state and local environmental protection agency to identify air monitoring and spill control capabilities**
7. **Predetermine communication plan (example: ICS form 205/205A)**

**As the InterAgency Board identifies new information on this topic, it will be posted in the “Documents” area of the IAB website. Please contact the InterAgency Board at info@interagencyboard.us with any comments, feedback, and questions. Additional information on the InterAgency Board is available at www.IAB.gov.**