



ILLINOIS STATE POLICE

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL AGENCIES WRAP UP EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO ANHYDROUS AMMONIA LEAK

TEUTOPOLIS – The Illinois State Police (ISP), Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS), Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), and Illinois Department of Public Health, along with the Effingham County Sheriff's Office, Teutopolis Fire Protection District, and other law enforcement, fire, and emergency management agencies in Effingham County are wrapping up the emergency response to a multi-vehicle accident involving a semi-truck transporting anhydrous ammonia. Teutopolis residents have been allowed to return home and U.S. Highway 40 is open.

At approximately 9:25 p.m. on Friday, September 29, 2023, ISP was notified of a crash on U.S. Highway 40 about a half mile east of Teutopolis involving multiple vehicles, including a semi-truck leaking anhydrous ammonia. The semi-truck was carrying approximately 7,500 gallons of anhydrous ammonia at the time of the accident, of which 4,000 gallons leaked from the tanker. Due to the plume from the ammonia leak, roughly 500 residents were evacuated from northeastern parts of Teutopolis and U.S. Highway 40 was closed between Effingham and Montrose. Five fatalities occurred as a result of the incident and multiple injuries were reported.

Local, state, and federal agencies coordinated response efforts and will continue to follow up.

- State and local law enforcement, along with local fire and emergency management responded to the crash to render aid.
- IDOT was involved with road closures and has since reopened U.S. Highway 40 between Effingham and Montrose.
- IEMA-OHS coordinated and offered resources for the response.
- A contractor hired by the responsible tanker truck reviewed the situation and advised on the best plan to safely empty the tanker.
- A private hazmat company removed the anhydrous ammonia by patching and then filling the tanker with water.
- U.S. EPA performed air monitoring throughout the community and evacuation zone and did not detect any levels of concern.
- Local law enforcement lifted the evacuation from Pearl Street in Teutopolis, along U.S. Highway 40 to 2100 North Road, North to I-70, west to Pearl Street, and residents were able to return before 8 p.m. Saturday
- Law enforcement worked to remove all involved vehicles from the scene to a local tow yard.

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On-going:

- Illinois EPA will ensure contamination resulting from the incident is properly addressed.
- ISP continues to investigate the cause of the crash, including performing traffic crash reconstruction.

“IDPH is working with our local health department partner to monitor the situation and provide needed support,” said IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra. “We remind residents to ventilate their homes upon return. If they detect unusual odors, they should leave immediately and call 911. IDPH is also working on guidance regarding testing of private water wells in the immediate vicinity of the incident to check for possible contamination. We remain in consultation with the local health department and the Illinois Department of Agriculture regarding animals and livestock in the area and procedures for transporting them for veterinary evaluation.”

Thank you to the Effingham County Sheriff’s Office, Teutopolis Fire Protection District, and all local law enforcement, fire, and emergency agency responders, along with state and federal agencies who responded and helped facilitate a resolution to this horrible incident.

“In am impressed with the quality and amount of assistance received from the local and state agencies,” said Effingham County Sheriff Paul Kuhns.

For additional information about the five fatalities, please contact the Effingham County Coroner’s Office.

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