

New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH)
Community and First Responder Health Surveys
Paulsboro, New Jersey

On the morning of November 30, 2012 a freight train derailed in Paulsboro releasing vinyl chloride gas into the air. Residents and first responders may have been exposed to vinyl chloride gas by breathing it in. Many people felt ill and some went to the hospital. Residents close to the crash site were evacuated from their homes in the days following the derailment and gas leak.

The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) has asked for assistance from the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to help assess the health impact on community members and first responders following the train derailment in Paulsboro. Both federal agencies are part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Why are the health agencies surveying people affected by the train derailment?

Information collected by health surveys will help the agencies and the community better understand the public health impact of the derailment and vinyl chloride leak.

Who will the health agencies survey?

NIOSH and NJDOH will survey all first responders.

ATSDR and NJDOH will survey community members in two ways. Initially, agency staff will conduct in-person interviews with a *sample* of residents in both the evacuated and non-evacuated areas of Paulsboro. All other households of Paulsboro will be sent a survey in the mail that should be filled out and returned to the NJDOH. By doing this, the health agencies hope to hear from all community residents.

What will the survey ask about?

The survey will ask about your experiences after the train derailment, including where you spent time, what symptoms you may have felt, what medical care you received, and how you received information about the incident and instructions about what to do.

Is it important to participate in the survey?

Yes. It is important to get information from as many community members as possible, including those who haven't experienced health effects or symptoms as well as from those who have, to get an accurate picture of the health impact.

How will I find out about the results of the survey?

Health agencies will prepare written summary reports of the findings of the health surveys, and make these available to the public. Individual responses to the survey will be kept confidential, and no one's individual health data will appear in a public report.

Who should I contact if I have any questions?

If you have any questions about the health surveys, please contact the New Jersey Department of Health at (609) 826-4920.

