



ICC's Annual Hazardous Material Report Found Minimal Violations on Illinois Railways

Chicago, IL – The Illinois Commerce Commission released its annual report on accidents and incidents involving hazardous materials (hazmat) on Illinois railroads. Of the 8,549 rail cars inspected in 2022, the ICC found **violations in just 1.3 percent of all inspections**. When these inspections first started in 1981, violations topped 12 percent.

“The disaster in East Palestine has rightfully turned attention to our nation’s rail safety efforts. Our hazardous materials report is an important resource for understanding the kinds of incidents that occur on Illinois railways and helps the Commission to inform its ongoing safety measures,” said **ICC Chairman Carrie Zalewski**. “Investigating these incidents when they occur is critical, but the goal of routine inspections is ultimately to minimize and prevent these disasters from occurring in the first place.”

To help prevent hazmat disasters, ICC inspectors conduct frequent field checks to evaluate signals, track structure, operating practices, and hazardous materials transported by rail. In cooperation with Federal Railroad Administration inspectors, ICC inspectors focus on railroad mainline tracks, rail yards, and the industrial facilities of shippers and consignees of hazardous materials. Any violations or defects discovered, regardless of severity must be corrected to prevent serious incidents.

In addition to routine inspections, the ICC’s Hazardous Materials Safety Program includes technical assistance to shippers, consignees, and rail carriers; the inspection and escort of nuclear materials; and education and outreach activities. To keep communities safe in the event of a derailment, ICC works with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency to provide technical aid to local emergency responders and investigate the cause of hazmat incidents.

The ICC is required by law to prepare a report on hazmat accidents for the General Assembly including the location, substance involved, amounts involved, and the suspected reason for each accident, as well as the rail line and point of origin of the hazardous material involved in each accident. Three categories of information contained in the report have also been added by the ICC’s Railroad Safety Section to make the report more useful. These include the type of equipment involved, date of incident, and the amount of hazardous material released in the accident. “Amount Released” is distinct from the required “Amount Involved.” “Amount Involved” is simply the quantity of commodity that was being transported; the “Amount Released” into the environment by an accident is far more critical.

To read the report on accidents and incidents involving hazardous materials on railroads in Illinois [click here](#).

About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate,

reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission's Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices and bureaus, click [here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

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