

Train derailment forces overnight closure of I-40, remains ablaze

Written by gallupsun

Saturday, 27 April 2024 07:58

McKinley County Fire & Rescue was dispatched to a BNSF train that had reportedly derailed and caught fire off Interstate 40 near the New Mexico/Arizona state line around 12:45 pm on April 26.

When they arrived at the scene, they discovered that approximately 35 rail cars carrying mixed freight derailed, six of which contained Liquified Petroleum Gas, otherwise known as propane.

Multiple agencies responded to the incident, including McKinley County Fire & Rescue, McKinley County Office of Emergency Management, Gallup Fire Department, New Mexico State Police and BNSF Railway Police. There were no injuries reported.

To mitigate existing conditions and for the safety of the surrounding community, evacuations were issued and remain in place for residents within a two-mile radius of the derailment site as of 7 am on April 27. BNSF is currently working directly with displaced residents to provide all necessary lodging and accommodations. Additionally, air monitoring and fire suppression assessments are ongoing at the derailment.

I-40 is still closed in both directions. Traffic is currently being rerouted

The Incident Command Post is active and consists of members from McKinley County Fire & Rescue, McKinley County Office of Emergency Management, McKinley County Sheriff's Office, Gallup Fire Department, Gallup Police Department, New Mexico State Police, BNSF Railway Police, BNSF and in cooperation with Navajo Nation Fire and Rescue, Navajo Police Department, Apache County Sheriff's Office, Apache County Office of Emergency Management, Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management, the New Mexico Department of Transportation, and other state, local, tribal and federal agencies.

A hotline has been established at (866) 243-4784 for those affected as a result of this derailment.

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