



NEWS RELEASE

CN DERAILMENT WORRIES STRATHCONA COUNTY RESIDENTS

AN ACCIDENT WAITING TO HAPPEN

(Edmonton) August 19, 2010. Residents in the Bretona community in southern Strathcona County are worried that a derailment similar to the one that occurred at the CN Scotford Rail Yard on August 18, 2010 could easily happen at a rail yard presently under construction right next to their homes.

An industrial rail yard is being built less than 1km east of Edmonton by Cando Contracting Ltd. to store 225 petroleum tanker cars owned by Imperial Oil. The rail yard will consist of a siding (extra track) next to the existing CN railway plus 10 tracks built side-by-side. It will be a parking lot for tanker rail cars that are used for hauling various petroleum products. The land is being leased from CN. The rail yard is essentially a joint project between Cando Contracting Ltd, CN and Imperial Oil.

Residents who live very near the rail yard presently under construction visited the CN Scotford Rail Yard derailment site near Fort Saskatchewan on August 18 to see first-hand what might happen near their homes. Many of the derailed cars at Scotford are dangerous goods tanker cars, similar to the cars that will be stored near their homes.

"Based on our research, rail yards are particularly prone to accidents due to switching problems, clear sight line problems, and any number of human errors," said John Kristensen whose home is only 163m from the rail yard being built by Cando Contracting Ltd. "The rail yard right next to us is being built at one end of a major bend in CN's mainline, and the switch between the rail yard siding and the mainline will not be in clear sight line vision of trains traveling south on the mainline. This is a certain recipe for disaster," continued Kristensen.

Kristensen and his neighbours are particularly worried because the tanker cars that will be moving in and out of the rail yard will be carrying flammable petroleum products, and if an accident such as at Scotford were to occur, there is a very good chance of a major explosion. "Whether these cars are empty, full or partially full, they will be ticking time bombs moving in and out of a rail yard in a dangerous situation near the bend in the CN mainline. This will be an accident waiting to happen." said Kristensen.

Residents in the area have been doing all they can to stop the rail yard construction which started June 21, 2010. None of the adjacent landowners was notified about this project, nor were they given any opportunity to object. They have phoned, emailed and written federal and provincial Cabinet Ministers, the County of Strathcona, the Canadian Transportation Agency, CN Rail, Imperial Oil, the Railway Association of Canada and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. So far, no one appears willing or able to help stop this construction.

"They could not possibly have found a worse location for this rail yard," said Kristensen. "It's much closer to my neighbour's home and my home than the joint Railway Association of Canada/Federation of Canadian Municipalities proximity policy and even CN's own proximity policy of a minimum 300m distance between homes and rail yards. How can they ignore or intentionally disregard their own policies?"

And, to make things worse, the rail yard is less than 30m from two protected conservation areas: Bretona Pond Buck-for-Wildlife Area and the Bretona ConservAction Area. No formal environmental impact assessments were conducted prior to construction of this rail yard. Kristensen said, "This violates CN's and Imperial Oil's environmental policies and principles and CN's Code of Business Conduct, as we have pointed out in letters to the respective Presidents and CEOs."

As well, the letters indicate that the lack of notification to adjacent landowners and providing no opportunities for objections also violate CN and Imperial Oil policies and principles.

"Concerned residents near the rail yard have established a website titled 'Railroaded' because that's exactly how we feel.....like we've been railroaded into accepting this industrial facility in the middle of our agricultural, natural and recreational community. It's totally unacceptable!" stated Kristensen.

The www.Railroaded.ca website includes: a blog, fact sheets, references, news, map, photos of the affected area and rail yard construction activities, relevant legislation and railway operating rules, other links, and more.

Local residents will continue their fight to stop this rail yard.

- 30 -

For more information, see www.Railroaded.ca or contact:

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