

### **Excerpt from “CN Railway Derailments, Other Accidents and Incidents”**

**June 19, 2009.** Cherry Valley, Illinois. 19 of 74 tank cars carrying flammable ethanol, derailed at a highway railway crossing where cars waited for the train to pass. 13 of the derailed cars were punctured, causing the ethanol to spill which exploded into a huge fireball. The train, hauling a total of 114 cars, was carrying about 2 million gallons of ethanol. One 44-year-old woman waiting at the railway crossing burned to death, and 9 to 11 others were injured (reports vary). The dead woman's husband was burned but survived and her 19-year-old pregnant daughter was injured and lost her baby. 600 nearby homes were evacuated due to the intensity of the ethanol fire. About 60,000 gallons of ethanol spilled into a creek that flows into the Rock and Kishwaukee rivers, killing a minimum of 72,350 fish, many of which were game species. The Illinois Attorney General found CN Rail responsible for what was characterized as the single-largest fish kill that was not natural in the history of the state of Illinois. Monetary damages were estimated to total \$7.9 million. The NTSB investigation found a washout of the tracks, a failure of CN's emergency communications, and inadequate design of the tanker cars all contributed to the derailment and severity of the accident. The NTSB report released in February 2012 contained many more criticisms of CN. Associated Press research of U.S. statistics revealed that ethanol tank cars have been breached in at least 40 serious accidents between 2000 and mid-2012. An Illinois District County Court ordered CN to pay US\$36 million to settle 2 negligence lawsuits that revealed Canada's largest railway was negligent in the operation, maintenance and supervision of the train and track. ([Associated Press](#) Sept 12/12, [Rock River Times](#) June 6/12, NTSB Report RAR-12-01)