

Monday March 09, 2015 CBC News

## Two fiery train derailments near Gogama, ON in past month

"Holy mackerel!" That's Gerry Talbot's reaction to the fact two CN trains have gone off the tracks and burst into flames near his community of Gogama, Ontario, south of Timmins. The latest derailment happened early Saturday morning just a few kilometres from the town's centre.

The train was carrying Alberta crude and 38 cars left the tracks and burst into the flames. The fire is still burning today. Two of the cars landed in the Makami River and are leaking oil into the waterway.

Gerry Talbot is the secretary with the Local Services Board for the rural community. He says things are progressing well, but some question whether new federal rail safety regulations go far enough.

"There are booms in place to hold back the oil. There's three booms and there was no oil or residue at the second boom so that's very good news. And they're going to start sucking up the oil that is at the first boom. So that's good news when you don't have that oil residue making its way up the river," says Talbot.

Talbot says community members in Gogama want answers from CN and government officials as to why the derailments are happening. He also expressed concern about not knowing what's in the rail cars passing through his community.

The cars that derailed were compliant with the new federal safety regulations, but they still caught fire and still punctured. That's a problem says Talbot.

"Hey guys, we've got to do something about this. You know, these people don't need to go through this amount of stress. I can handle other kinds of stress, but this is getting a little too close to home."

There are currently no drinking water or air quality advisories in place as a result of the derailment, but Talbot says the Makami River is a fish sanctuary, and the impact on the fish has not yet been determined.

On February 14th, another CN train carrying diluted bitumen from Alberta derailed 30 kilometres outside of Gogama. That there have been two accidents within three weeks near Gogama is a concern, says Talbot.

"Well it certainly brings it home because of the Lac-Megantic tragedy. You got one that's two kilometres away and you see the flames, you see the smoke, yeah, holy mackerel, is the next one right in Gogama?"