

## **Tanker Truck Incidents and Community Safety**

**Date:** May 31, 2024

**To:** Infrastructure and Environment Committee

**From:** Executive Director, Toronto Emergency Management,

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

---

This report responds to City Council Motion (MM8.28) dated July 19, 2023. It was requested that Toronto Emergency Management, in consultation with Toronto Fire Services and Toronto Paramedic Services, assess the risks faced by Toronto residents living near Highway 401 from transportation incidents.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

The Executive Director, Toronto Emergency Management recommends that:

1. The Infrastructure and Environment Committee receive this report for information.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

---

Toronto Emergency Management confirms that there are no financial implications arising from this report on the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

---

On July 19, 2023, City Council requested the Executive Director, Toronto Emergency Management, in consultation with the Fire Chief and General Manager, Toronto Fire Services and the Chief of Toronto Paramedic Services to report on this risk and actions the City of Toronto might take to ensure its residents who live in close proximity to

Highway 401 are safe and to include possible recommendations to the Provincial and Federal Governments.

[Agenda Item History - 2023.MM8.28 \(toronto.ca\)](#)

## COMMENTS

---

### Issue Background

On June 20, 2023, at approximately 10:30 p.m. an eastbound fuel tanker crashed into the centre barrier separating a stretch of Highway 401 at Brock Road in the City of Pickering (Durham Region). The fuel tanker was hauling two trailers of flammable fuel which were ruptured, causing the trailers to burst into flames. Two other vehicles travelling westbound at the time of the crash were caught in the fire, resulting in two fatalities as confirmed by the Ontario Provincial Police. The impacted section of Highway 401 was closed for more than 24 hours to allow for the Ontario Provincial Police and Ministry of Transportation to conduct an accident investigation and make emergency repairs.

### Identifying and Mitigating Risk

*The Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992* and associated Regulations are the guiding federal legislation and safety standards for anyone who imports, handles, or transports a dangerous good via rail, air, marine, and road across Canada. The Act's regulations ensure strict accountability on a range of requirements for vehicles that may transport dangerous goods. Such requirements include routine vehicle inspection and maintenance, as well as driver training and certification. Provincially, the *Dangerous Goods Transportation Act, R.S.O 1990* parallels federal requirements and applies to highways under provincial jurisdiction.

Since its implementation in 1992, the Federal Government has amended regulations under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act over time to improve safety measures. These changes are driven by ongoing assessments of risk, technological advancements and lessons learned from incidents as well as regulatory reviews.

Locally, Toronto Emergency Management reviews hazards and risks to the City on a regular basis that are used to inform effective planning and preparedness. Based on the data from Toronto Fire Services and Toronto Paramedic Services, traffic incidents involving dangerous goods on the 401 currently remain rare.

### Planning and Preparation

As incidents involving dangerous goods or hazardous materials require specialized response, the City's emergency services regularly maintain preparedness measures including:

- Acquiring and maintaining their equipment;

- Holding regular training and exercises; and,
- Establishing and reviewing their protocols.

Toronto Fire Services is often the first response in many emergencies, including those that occur on its roads and highways within its geographical borders. TFS operates a hazardous materials program which includes specialized training for staff assigned to the Hazardous material apparatus. Additionally, Toronto Fire Services administers Toronto's Heavy Urban Search and Rescue, and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives team. These teams receive specialized training and would be utilized for major events or incidents that include either Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives or large-scale rescue. The Heavy Urban Search and Rescue and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives teams deploy, as required, both within Toronto and Provincially under agreement with the Ontario Office of the Fire Marshal.

Toronto Paramedic Services staff are trained to provide comprehensive medical interventions as well as medical support for the public and team members within these hazardous environments, including Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives teams, who like, Toronto Fire Services, have specialized training and resources to respond to incidents involving hazardous materials.

Additionally, Toronto Emergency Management informs residents about personal preparedness for all emergencies and provides timely information to the public on how they need to protect themselves, when it is needed, during an emergency. For tips on personal emergency preparedness, see "Get Emergency Ready" at [Public Safety & Alerts – City of Toronto](#).

## **Emergency Response and Recovery**

In the event of a major transportation incident, the City's emergency services will lead the response at the emergency site, under an Incident Commander. In order to support site operations, the City would activate the Emergency Operations Centre. The Toronto Emergency Management Control Group, under the direction of the Mayor, provides policy direction to the Emergency Operations Centre as required. As part of any response, the City's Strategic Public and Employee Communications division will also coordinate public messaging, working with the emergency services.

TEM maintains the City's Emergency Plan which includes procedures for evacuation and emergency social services to any residents that may be impacted by an incident. First responders plan and lead evacuations considering priority areas, phasing, egress routes, assembly points, populations with special needs and animal care. Toronto Emergency Management leads Emergency Social Services, which considers the urgent needs of evacuees, including people and their service animals and pets.

In the event of a major transportation incident requiring the evacuation of a community, any evacuation order will be disseminated through the City of Toronto's Strategic Public and Employee Communications Division (via various media outlets) working with the

Emergency Operations Centre, as well as door to door canvassing for impacted residents, if required.

## **CONTACT**

---

Jennifer Smysnuik, Director, Toronto Emergency Management  
416-392-3828, [Jennifer.smysnuik@toronto.ca](mailto:Jennifer.smysnuik@toronto.ca)

Jim Jessop, Deputy Chief, Toronto Fire Services  
416-338-9053, [jim.jessop@toronto.ca](mailto:jim.jessop@toronto.ca)

Atif Sharif, Commander, Toronto Paramedic Services  
416-397-7493, [atif.sharif@toronto.ca](mailto:atif.sharif@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

Joanna Beaven-Desjardins,  
Executive Director, Toronto Emergency Management

## **ATTACHMENTS**

---