CARD #06
DERAILMENT DISASTERS

- Major human life losses on horizon
- Oil spillage and explosions
- Chlorine spills
- Ammonia spills

DETAIL SCRIPT FOR #06
DERAILMENT DISASTERS

Major human life losses are on the horizon. The majority of the advocacy work done to date, including that of documented UDE's and slides, has managed to evade discussion surrounding the loss of human life as a direct outcome of rail derailments. The reality of serious impacts and danger to human safety and lives requires attention by our Provincial and Federal governments as we observe changes in rail travel on our shoreline route, such as longer and heavier trains, increased frequency, the effects climate change is imposing on railroads, as well as human error. The rail disaster that claimed 50 human lives in Lac-Megantic in July 2013 is still being felt today. It is estimated that it will take decades to overcome the political, legal, and human devastation that was imposed on this community; see Lac-Meg link here

Oil spillage and explosions remain a distinct possibility as long as Bakken USA crude oil continues to come north to Roberts Banks for ocean shipment; Lac Megantic is our most vivid Canadian example; the following video also shows in many examples what can happen when crude oil explodes after a disaster; this is a 2014 video by the website 'Rail and Reason' we acknowledge that some improvements in rail cars and safety procedures have since occurred in Canada and the US; more remains to be done; nothing is certain; see Explosions link here

A list of DOT dangerous goods placards numbers observed on BNSF trains, along the White Rock promenade, from about January to July 2013, was compiled by an interested safety advocate; we will attempt to have this updated either manually of electronically and will report as time permits. See chart at left.

Chlorine spills are another serious outcome of train derailment and threaten to devastate human life in the affected areas. These dangers to humans are particularly prominent concerns to those living in and using the area of Crescent Beach. Since chlorine is heavier than air, it slowly seeks lower ground as it spreads out to larger areas. If a spill occurs in Crescent Beach it is believed that a natural reaction by humans will be to flee into the water to seek refuge. This does not prove effective as it does not eliminate humans from the grave danger of toxic fume inhalation of chlorine gases that would be present. Consider the Mississauga chlorine spill of November 1979 where major evacuations and actions by many heroes, prevented a major disaster; see Mississauga link here; lastly, we regret we were unable to obtain action from that mentioned Colorado US firm who specialize in visual modelling air spills and contamination over undulating ground, they are simply swamped with work; they suggested contacting UBC locally where upon we hope to get produced a visual model of what a chlorine spill might look like in the Crescent Beach area, and how it might unfold; we will report as soon as possible.

Ammonia spills are an always present danger as long as railroads continue to carry this product. The best ammonia spill example is the 2002 derailment in Minot ND, which killed one, injured 95, and derailed 112 cars with the cause being joint fatigue and improper maintenance; see Minot derail link here ...

Multiple derailments occur across Canada without a lot of national median attention; raise your awareness by reading data, examples, discussion; see Lots-of-Derails link here