

WEST VIRGINIA

Train derails, sending oil into river and sparking fire

MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

A train carrying crude oil derailed and caught fire Monday in West Virginia, less than two weeks after the U.S. Department of Transportation sent a package of new rail safety regulations to the White House for review.

The CSX train was traveling on the same route as another crude oil train that derailed and caught fire 10 months ago in downtown Lynchburg, Va. It was the second derailment in as many days of a train loaded with crude oil. Early Sunday, a Canadian National train loaded with crude oil derailed in northern Ontario. At least seven cars burst into flames.

In Monday's derailment, residents of two small towns east of Charleston were evacuated, and at least one tank car fell into the Kanawha River, according to the West Virginia Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety. The river supplies drinking water for several local communities.

The blaze, which also sparked a house fire, was expected to burn throughout the night.

A spokesman for the department said the 109-car train was traveling from North Dakota to Yorktown, Va., and that 12 to 15 cars had derailed. Trains from North Dakota's Bakken region travel to the Yorktown facility, where the oil is transferred to barges for delivery to refineries on the East Coast.

Photos taken by residents posted to Twitter showed a column of black

smoke and fire. Other fiery accidents have taken place in Casselton, N.D., Aliceville, Ala., and Lac-Megantic, Quebec. The latter derailment, in 2013, killed 47 people and

wiped out the town's business district.

The response to Monday's derailment was complicated by a winter storm, with up to 10 inches of snow in the area.