

Shelter In Place Order Lifted: Sulfur Cloud Rises Overnight Near Illinois Route 3, But Contained In Early Morning

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter
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ROSEWOOD HEIGHTS - An alert was issued for drivers traveling Illinois Route 3 from Wood River to Hawthorne Street from about 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. Friday in Hartford because a sulfur cloud from a train car leak lifted into that area. Wood River

Police Chief Brad Wells said the cloud started to rise overnight with daylight and higher temperatures.

"The HAZMAT crew now has a handle on it and is working to make sure it doesn't happen again," Wells said. "It has been a very fluid situation for them."

Chief Wells said the Shelter In Place order for certain parts of the area was lifted as of 7:30 a.m. Friday. The train sulfur leak incident started at 3 p.m. Wednesday and then continued overnight into Thursday. Fire agencies from Wood River, East Alton, Godfrey, Roxana, Rosewood Heights, Alton, Edwardsville, and Madison County HAZMAT team and Madison County Emergency Management Agency were all called to the scene at first but now agencies from across Illinois and Missouri are now on scene to help. The original incident happened on the railroad tracks behind Mike's Manufacturing off Illinois Route 3 and involved four train cars leaking sulfuric acid.

Norfolk Southern said four stationary rail cars containing sulfuric acid had become over-pressurized and were venting on Thursday. The cars were part of a group of five cars originally picked up from the Phillips 66 Refinery and staged while awaiting pick up by KCS Railroad. Norfolk Southern personnel, HAZMAT contractors, and local first responders have been on the scene assessing the situation, monitoring air quality, and developing plans.

The Wood River Fire Department began deploying a water curtain to help disperse the escaping vapor. Additionally, water was put directly on the rail cars to contain the vapors.

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)