

Standard Operating Procedures Rail Cars

Helena chemical, located at South Virginia occasionally performs a chemical process called "reacting". Prior to performing this process several rail cars are brought in through the City of Port Lavaca via railroad. These rail cars contain hazardous materials in the form of Anhydrous Ammonia and Phosphoric Acid. Helena chemical does notify us via email and phone when they plan on bringing the hazardous material through the city. The Fire Department does attempt to escort the rail cars through the city when possible. Daily duties such as incident response, hydrant maintenance, training, and building inspections do hinder that attempt at times. The Fire Department maintains a close working relationship with Helena Chemical. We have held multiple training events to familiarize fire department personnel on the operation of equipment used in the reaction process as well as emergency shut down procedures. The rail car operators maintain speeds during travel through the city that are safe for the rail cars in the event of an accident or the event a rail car was to derail.

Sincerely,

Joe Reyes,
Fire Chief
City of Port Lavaca