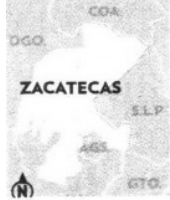


ZACATECAS

Cargo train derails in Calera



A train derailed early Wednesday morning in the Calera municipality of Zacatecas, spilling its cargo of highly corrosive concentrated phosphoric acid.

Juan Antonio Caldera Alaniz, director of the Zacatecas Fire Department, said that the accident occurred just after midnight on Wednesday morning on a rail line owned by the Ferromex corporation in a residential area of Calera, located 20 kilometers (12 miles) outside Zacatecas City.

According to Caldera Alaniz, three of the 12 railway cars that derailed in the accident contained concentrated phosphoric acid — which is harmful

to the skin and releases hazardous vapors — but the container tank only broke in one of the three cars.

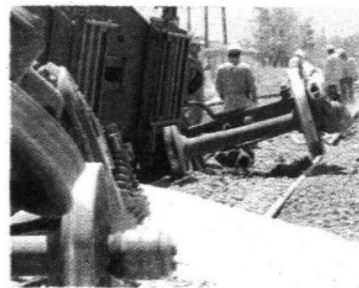
He said that Civil Protection agents acted quickly to contain the chemical spill and prevent the acid from contaminating residential areas, finishing their work at 3 a.m., two and a half hours after the accident occurred.

Though concentrated phosphoric acid is highly corrosive and dangerous, in smaller amounts it is harmless — the acid is even used as an ingredient in soft drinks — and its fumes don't present a risk when dissipated into the atmosphere, Caldera Alaniz said.

Caldera Alaniz said that the situation is under control, adding that the Communications and Transportation

Secretariat (SCT), the Special Prosecutors Office for Environmental Protection (Profepa) and the Natural Resources and Environmental Secretariat (Semarnat) are working to continue to clean up the spill and determine the cause of the accident.

THE NEWS



SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

A train carrying phosphoric acid derailed in Calera, Zacatecas.

