

Employees Injured During Train Collision on Napier Subdivision

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Dec. 8, 2021

Two BNSF employees sustained non-life threatening injuries on Dec. 3 after a rear-end collision occurred between an empty coal train and a manifest train on the Napier Subdivision of the Heartland Division.

We are extremely thankful that this incident did not result in a tragic loss of life. It did, however, result in a large-scale mainline derailment.



While the investigation is still ongoing, this is the preliminary information we know:

At approximately 6:32 a.m. Central Standard Time (CST), an empty coal train operating North-bound on the Napier Subdivision at approximately 42 MPH impacted the rear end of a manifest train that was stopped at Pacific Junction. This incident occurred outside the track warrant limits of the empty coal train, resulting in non-life threatening injuries to two crew members and the derailment of a total of 16 cars and two locomotives (combined from both trains).

As we continue to investigate the circumstances that led to this incident, we want to take the opportunity to review several critical factors to ensure all movements are completed safely:

Alert and Attentive: As professional railroaders, it is vital to avoid **distractions, complacency** and **rushing**. We must take ownership through our ability to make safe decisions in every task performed and hold ourselves and others accountable. Let's all continue to identify the risks, pause the work, re-brief and make appropriate adjustments in order to keep everyone safe.

Communication is Key: Clear communication is crucial to safety. Never make assumptions — ask for clarification if you are in doubt about what was said or heard during transmission and repetition of track authorities.

Track Warrant Limits: It is critical that crew members understand, copy and repeat their track warrant back to the Dispatcher correctly each time or follow SSI 18 Electronic Delivery of Information and refer to the track warrant form, as needed, to ensure their train does not exceed their authority limits or the train crew doesn't roll up the limits of authority that are still being occupied by another train crew. When using the Electronic Delivery of Information method, train crews will receive "delivery prompts" for track warrants. Because PTC is in a disengaged state, these will not be enforced by PTC. The train dispatcher will state the track warrant number, and if included, Box 5 (after arrival). Train crew will confirm receipt of the track warrant to the train dispatcher by stating the track warrant number, limits (including track), and total number of boxes marked—including which specific boxes are marked. The train dispatcher will confirm information repeated is correct.

- **Example** Train dispatcher states: "BNSF 5179 East, did you receive track warrant 725-45 with a Box 5 on your PTC display?"
- Train crew responds: "BNSF 5179 East, yes we did receive track warrant 725-45 from Anna to Bess on main track with two boxes marked, 2 and 5." If the train crew cannot confirm the directive is on the PTC display or if the information displayed is incorrect, the directive will be issued using the verbal transmission/repetition process. Dispatch will notify the PTC desk.
- **Note:** For more information on Track Warrants, refer to GCOR 14.0 Rules Applicable Only Within Track Warrant Control (TWC) Limits.