

SUNDAY



SPORTS: Kentucky remains unbeaten; Wisconsin also makes Final Four / **Section C**

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Fracking

Increase in trucks has drawbacks

By Rick Rouan
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

CADIZ, Ohio — The warning signs and convoys of semi trucks have become part of the landscape in eastern

Ohio's shale country, where a drilling surge has brought more big rigs to rural roads. *Oil and gas truck traffic ahead.*

The orange placards and the trucks they portend might

be the clearest sign yet of the dual role locals say the region's oil and gas industry has assumed as both economic engine and potential danger for drivers sharing winding two-lane roads with

18-wheelers.

Those trucks haul stone, heavy equipment used to build well pads, drilling rigs and other materials. And

See **Trucks** Page **A9**

Public safety

Bakken oil trains roll across city

By Laura Arenschield
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Almost 1.4 million Ohioans live within a half-mile of railroad lines where some of the most-volatile crude oil in North America rolls by each week, a *Dispatch* analysis has found.

Those people, about 12 percent of the state's population, are at risk of being forced from their homes should a train hauling crude oil from the Bakken shale fields of North Dakota run off the tracks.

About 15 percent of Franklin

See **Bakken** Page **A8**



BROOKE LAVALLEY | DISPATCH

Ben Stewart and Janel Denton pay \$2,645 a month for a two-bedroom apartment in the Normandy building Downtown.

RENTAL BOOM

Apartment construction in central Ohio catching up to changing demand

By Jim Weiker • THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Central Ohio's explosion of new apartments shows no signs of slowing down, thanks to folks like Janel Denton and Joe Giannetti. • Both could buy homes but choose to rent. • Denton and Giannetti are among thousands of tenants who have moved into new central Ohio apartments in the past two years. They illustrate why the apartment boom represents a fundamental shift in central Ohio and why it isn't likely to end soon. | See **Boom** Page **A12**

Law enforcement

Township patrols still in limbo

By Josh Jarman
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

From her front porch at the top of a switchback wheelchair ramp, Robyn Watkins surveys her neighborhood: a line of single-family homes behind chain-link fences with no-trespassing signs in the windows.

But she's more worried about what she can't see — including the local police.

Watkins' house, the one she grew up in and which has been home to her family for more than 60 years, is in the Mon-E-Bak neighborhood of Franklin

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Township

FROM PAGE A1

Township. On a map, the township looks like a shotgun blast of unincorporated land speckling the face of Columbus' West Side.

The township trustees have been unable to cooperate, or be near one another. One trustee even grab another by the neck during a township meeting. Still, they managed to lay off more than half of their 11-person police force in February because of dwindling funds.

Sheriff Zach Scott said his deputies respond to emergency calls there when local police aren't on duty, which is most of the time. But deputies won't patrol or respond to routine complaints. That means township cops have to respond to day-old calls when they come on duty, leaving no time

to cruise neighborhoods looking for signs of trouble.

So who's to blame?

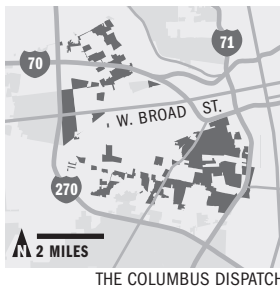
The trustees say it is the county's responsibility to pick up the slack. The sheriff says the county commissioners need to give him more deputies so he can patrol the area. And the commissioners say the sheriff has enough people to cover the township now.

That leaves residents such as Watkins stuck in the middle.

"We need a police department," Watkins said.

It's true that the trustees have missed opportunities to put a levy before voters to raise the money for police. As recently as last month, they fumbled a deadline to make the May primary ballot, which means the soonest the township can go before voters is November.

Franklin Township



THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Because property-tax collections would take months to reach township coffers, it would be at least a year before the township could pay for its own police force again. And that's only if residents voted for it.

"Definitely more should be done," long-time Trustee Timothy Guyton said, adding that the township should have put a levy on last November's ballot as well. "The problem is, we have a split board."

He said the trustees

can't agree on whether to ask for a permanent or temporary levy — he wants a short-term one — or if they should ask at all. Township voters have turned down three fire-levy requests in a row.

But Trustee John Fleshman, the newest member, said police levy or not, the county has a duty to protect residents.

"How did they come to the conclusion that these taxpayers would not be provided the same service as taxpayers in other parts of the county?" Fleshman said, referring to townships without local police departments.

Knowing that the loss of township police was a probability, Scott and his chief deputies approached the township more than a year ago to see if the trustees would be willing to contract with his office for coverage, as do other townships. He said the trus-

tees turned him down.

Then, last week he sent a letter to the commissioners asking for three more deputies to help patrol the area. He's unlikely to get them.

Commissioner John O'Grady said in response to the letter that Scott has more than 60 vacant positions in his budget now, and he should fill those before he asks for more. Commissioners already have approved adding 11 deputies for patrol this year; none of those jobs has been filled.

Covering the township isn't a personnel problem, it's a management problem, O'Grady said, and one the sheriff — who is running for Columbus mayor against O'Grady's political ally Andrew J. Ginther — has the budget to figure out. But, he also said, the county didn't create this mess.

"This is not for the sheriff's office to solve,"

O'Grady said. "The solution is, the township trustees need to step up and put this on the ballot and let the residents vote for it."

Watkins said it's sad that elected officials bicker instead of lead.

She doesn't know if her neighbors will support a levy, either. After all, the township couldn't get a state grant to help run waterlines to the neighborhood, and a project to connect the homes to sanitary sewers is in limbo because of a lawsuit over shoddy work.

Residents feel that the county and the township have given them nothing, so why should they give back, Watkins said.

Worse is that the situation was predictable. "We're basically living in the nightmare we all knew was coming," she said.

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Bakken

FROM PAGE A1

County's residents live within that zone, recommended by the U.S. Department of Transportation as the likely evacuation area during a crude-oil train derailment.

Most trains that transport crude oil stay on their tracks, but derailments can be catastrophic.

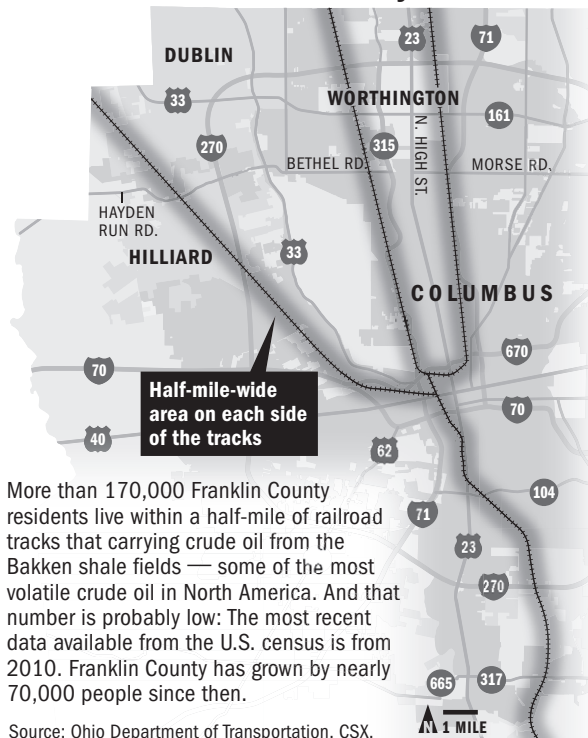
A Bakken train that derailed in 2013 burst into flames, killing 47 people and destroying most of downtown Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. Trains have wrecked in Ontario, as well as in Alabama, Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota, Pennsylvania and Virginia, sending trains up in flames, prompting mass evacuations and in some cases, obliterating homes.

A Bakken train derailed in West Virginia last month, forcing hundreds of people to evacuate their homes and spilling oil into the Kanawha River.

That train, run by CSX, almost certainly passed through Columbus. Three CSX tracks that carry crude oil from North Dakota to the East Coast converge in Columbus after passing through Worthington and running between Dublin and Hilliard. Those tracks then head south through Ohio and into West Virginia.

Teresa Mills, program director of the Buckeye Forest Council, said that both rail officials and the

Bakken on Franklin County rails



Source: Ohio Department of Transportation, CSX, U.S. Census Bureau

oil and gas industry should do more to keep people safe.

"Before they leave the fields, before they pump that oil into a train, they should be required to make that oil less explosive," Mills said. "And if they can't transport it without its being so explosive — if the Bakken is so volatile that it can't be transported without being explosive — then they should leave it in the ground."

The Bakken shale field stretches over northwestern North Dakota and into Montana and produces some of the most-desirable crude oil in the

United States. It's often less expensive than imported crude. It also requires less refining than other shale oils to be turned into diesel fuel or gasoline.

But the same things that make Bakken crude such a good fuel source also make it highly flammable.

Ohio, with its more than 5,300 miles of tracks, is a key junction between the Bakken region and East Coast oil refineries. Rail lines that carry Bakken crude travel through or near Akron, Cleveland and Toledo as well as through Columbus.

Millions of gallons of Bakken crude come through Ohio each week

Bakken crude oil on Ohio railways

About 12 percent of Ohioans live within the half-mile of Bakken crude-oil railways that would be evacuated if an emergency occurs.

| AREA | PEOPLE AFFECTED |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Central Ohio | 286,350 |
| Franklin County | 170,497 |
| Cuyahoga County | 273,884 |
| Ohio | 1,362,648 |

Sources: State Emergency Response Commission, railroad companies, Dispatch analysis

Bakken routes



THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

on trains, according to the reports that railroad companies submit to the state. Those reports show that from 45 million to 137 million gallons of Bakken are moving on Ohio's railroad tracks every week.

A minimum of 2 million to 25 million gallons per week come through Franklin County alone.

That volume, combined with high-profile derailments, has prompted federal regulators, lawmakers, industrial lobbying groups and environmental nonprofit organizations to pay closer attention to how oil moves on rail lines throughout the country.

"If it could happen in these other places. It could surely happen right here in Ohio," said Melanie Houston, director of water policy and environmental health for the Ohio Environmental Council, an environmental advocacy group. "It could happen in a rural area, but it could also happen in a highly populated metropolitan area like Columbus."

The U.S. Department of

Transportation estimates that trains carrying crude oil or ethanol will derail an average of 10 times a year for the next 20 years. Property damage could top \$4 billion, the DOT analysis, completed last summer, found.

The department is preparing new rules on how crude oil is transported on tracks throughout the country. Last year, railroad companies voluntarily agreed to limit oil-train speeds to 40 mph in cities.

Ed Greenberg, a spokesman for the Association of American Railroads, a trade group that represents railroad companies, said that organization has lobbied for tougher restrictions on the tanker cars that carry crude oil.

"We believe that every tank car moving crude oil today should be phased out or built to a higher standard," Greenberg said.

But keeping people along crude-oil shipping lines safe will take a comprehensive approach,

said Tom Simpson, president of the Railway Supply Institute, which represents tank-car owners and manufacturers.

"The tank car is not the silver bullet. You cannot really design a tank car to withstand the derailment forces in a derailment, and so you can't get the risk down to zero," Simpson said. "You've got to look at the other factors, and that includes derailment prevention and ensuring (that) the materials have the proper packaging, and also educating the emergency-response personnel in the cities and villages along the right of way."

Franklin County's emergency responders are trying to learn more about a potential Bakken-crude derailment.

Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security has hired a consultant to study how much and what hazardous material is moving through the county, said Darrel Koerber, the department's deputy director. That report should be completed in the next few months.

Koerber said people who live near railroad tracks should "be informed about the risks."

"They should do their own risk assessment of their area so they have that information," he said. The next step "is to have a plan. Know what you're going to do in the event of an emergency."

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