

Cities ready for disaster

# Train derailment possible

by Robert McGlohon  
Battalion Staff

Forty-four railroad cars — including seven loaded with vinyl chloride, a poisonous gas — were involved in a Livingston, La., train derailment Tuesday. As a result, more than 2,000 people were evacuated from the area.

Jake Cangelose, Brazos County civil defense director, says the same thing is possible in Brazos county. In fact, a train derailment involving vinyl chloride did occur in Bryan several years ago. But because the train was travelling at a low speed, the cars were not punctured and the damage was slight.

"As long as we have the tracks and the trains we have the possibility of a derailment," Cangelose said.

Although he had no first hand knowledge of the Living-

ston derailment, he said, the train was probably moving at a high speed. Trains are limited to 10 mph while in the Bryan-College Station area.

"If you notice when the trains come through the cities, they're barely moving," Cangelose said.

If there is an accident involving hazardous materials in Brazos county, an Emergency Response Team is designed to handle it. The ERT is a part of the Brazos County Hazardous Materials Emergency Plan.

ERT members include fire and police chiefs from Bryan-College Station, the University Police chief, the county sheriff, the local director of public safety, and civil defense directors in the area.

In the event of an accident, the fire department deals with the accident while the police department handles crowd control, Cangelose said.

Thomas R. Parsons, director of security and traffic for Texas A&M University, said the University Police are well prepared for an emergency.

The biggest problem in an evacuation is getting people to believe them, Parsons said.

"I believe we could get the word out pretty fast," he said. "But the big problem is getting people to believe you."

He cited fire alarms in the Sterling C. Evans Library as an example.

"When the fire alarm goes off in the library, people simply don't believe it," Parsons said.

College Station Fire Chief Douglas Landua said the fire department's first units would reach the accident site in about

three minutes.

He stressed cooperation as the key to handling disasters.

Besides the ERT, Landua said, chemists from the University, the mayors and city managers of both cities and the railroad emergency team would be called in to assist in an emergency.

Fire and police departments in the surrounding area would be available to help, he said.

A 24 hour toll-free number can be called for advice on the handling of toxic chemicals.

"While the final decisions would be mine, I would be relying on the advice of others," Landua said. "Everybody pitches in."

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# Measles spread threatens fans

United Press International  
WACO — Baylor University and state health officials have opened another measles immunization clinic and officials warned of the danger of attending this weekend's football festivities.

Wednesday the outbreak had spread to a possible 80 cases and caused more than 4,000 students to be inoculated.

Baylor officials said the danger faces fans planning to attend the Baylor-Houston football game or parents' weekend festivities.

"We have more possible cases coming in hourly," said Baylor spokeswoman Karen Benson.

"We wanted to get the word out to anyone that might be coming to Waco for the game that if they are susceptible at all they need to get a vaccination before coming."

"This is the greatest concentration of red measles in the United States at the present time," she said. "Last year only 2,032 cases were reported in the entire United States."

The outbreak has caused concern for the football game Saturday.

day, which keys Parents' Day on campus, Benson said. Officials are worried because a number of young children frequently visit the campus on Parents' Day, she said.

A student who did summer missionary work in Honduras is believed to have brought the case of rubeola measles back and begun the outbreak.

Sometimes called the "10-day measles", the rubeola measles are like rubella measles, but not nearly as harmful. The measles do not cause birth defects if contracted by pregnant mothers, but they do tend to last longer and have more severe symptoms — such as higher fevers and worse rashes.

Officials at the University of Houston said they did not know about the outbreak and they were conferring with school heads to determine if any action should be taken.

Harris County health department officials Wednesday warned Houstonians planning to travel to Waco for the game to get measles vaccinations before they go, a spokesman said.

# Deadly fire ants should be reduced

United Press International  
AUSTIN — It is recommended that Texas spend \$12 million to combat imported fire ants, which have killed two Texans, and that half that money go toward research.

Special legislative committee chairman Rep. Dan Kubiak, D-Rockdale, said in his recommendation that fire ant infestations have reached epidemic proportions and are responsible for millions of dollars in agricultural losses.

The ants, noted for their painful — and possibly fatal — bites and hard earthen mounds they build in pastures, have caused 50 deaths nationwide.

The recommended \$12 million appropriation would be used in two ways.

The Texas Department of

Agriculture would use \$6 million to buy and distribute chemicals such as AMDRO, which have been found effective in fighting the ants.

But, Kubiak said, "There are not enough dollars in the state to chemically annihilate fire ants."

Therefore, the remaining \$6 million would be used to fund research at Texas A&M and Texas Tech universities aimed at finding a biological way of killing the ants. The committee proposed that the research funds be expended over a six-year period.

However, much of the four-hour committee meeting was devoted to the state agriculture department's request that it be allowed to use a pesticide very similar to one previously banned.

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