

Good Morning. My name is Kerry Kenney. I am the president of Boone County Fire District #4. Our district is located in the northeast part of Boone County. We represent approximately 118 Homeowners and Families in a 30 sq. mile area. We contract with Sharon Fire and Rescue to handle our fire protection services. Sharon Fire & Rescue is located just across the state line in Walworth County, Wisconsin. We contract with them because they are the closest fire district to our community. They work hand in hand with Capron Rescue who provides EMS for us. This arrangement has been working well for us for decades.

Sharon Fire and Rescue is a volunteer service. They have 8 trucks and 30 responders who live in Wisconsin and Illinois.

There is currently a rail line located in Sharon, Wisconsin which the fire trucks must cross before they reach a fire in our district. With this proposal, there would be another track and a siding track before the fire trucks could reach 2/3rds of our homes. The proposal also shows a road closure which increase response times to the center of our district.

This proposal will drastically change and has the potential to adversely affect the speed and efficiency of fire and EMS service to our residents. One unit train of 100 cars will stretch a mile long, if the train blocked 3 roads at a time, Sharon Fire and Rescue would then not be able to cross the tracks to get to our homes; namely Manchester Road, LeRoy Center Road and Coon Trail Road. Fire trucks would have many miles to travel to get to an emergency that is just across the tracks.

Sharon Fire and Rescue has had a train accident with the current rail line. At night, a car hit a parked train on Stateline Road. The road is posted at 55mph, it was night, and the train car was dark with no reflectors. This type of accident is a preventable nightmare.

The water source that is used to put out our fires is also located in Sharon, Wisconsin. So when fighting a fire, they must shuttle water from town with multiple large trucks. Our responders may have to cross the tracks more than one time. Time is precious and obstacles that can potentially increase their travel time are to be avoided.

Another concern with the rail line is maintenance of crossings. Village of Sharon has had trouble getting their gates at train crossings fixed. Gate malfunction could block a road for hours do to slow response from a maintenance crew. This is a problem for a fire truck which cannot make it through downed gates. In the country, a fire truck may back up a long way to find location to turn around.

Sharon Fire and Rescue has informed our district that the nearest Wisconsin HAZMAT A-Team is located in Racine and/or Madison, Wisconsin. Each of these cities, "over an hour away at least if there is a spill", We have no response for at least one hour or more.

"We, in Boone County Fire District #4, are concerned that this proposed rail line will adversely affect our public safety and therefore, we ask you to not grant the Great Lakes Basin Railroad an exemption but instead require them to do a full and rigorous Environmental Impact Study.