



Approved: March 14, 2023

Preliminary Report: HMD23LR001

This information is preliminary and subject to change.

FedEx Freight Semi Truck–Tractor Trailer Fire with Hazardous Materials

Monahans, Texas
February 22, 2023

On February 22, 2023, about 6:30 p.m. local time, a double trailer pulled by a FedEx Freight semi truck-tractor (truck) caught fire while traveling east on Interstate 20 (I-20), near mile marker 71, west of Monahans, Ward County, Texas. The truck, traveling from a FedEx loading facility in Arizona, was transporting hazardous materials in the rear of two trailers. The hazardous materials included two electric vehicle batteries (Class 9, UN3480 lithium-ion batteries) destined for a service center in Riviera Beach, Florida, and several containers of Class 8 liquid corrosives destined for a customer in Arlington, Texas.¹ The front trailer did not contain any hazardous materials. No injuries or evacuations were reported. Visibility conditions at the time of the accident were clear, and the temperature was 66°F. Vehicle damages are estimated by FedEx Freight to be more than \$95,000.

While en route, the truck driver pulled to the side of the road, and observed smoke coming from the rear trailer, which contained the hazardous materials. The driver then called 9-1-1 and detached the truck from the trailers. The smoke turned into a fire that destroyed both trailers. (See figure.)

¹ Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) 173.140 defines a Class 9 hazardous material as a miscellaneous material that presents a hazard during transportation but that does not meet the definition of any other hazard class. Title 49 CFR 173.136 defines a Class 8 hazardous material as a liquid or solid that causes irreversible damage to human skin at the site of contact within a specified period of time.



Figure. Fire damage to the truck trailers. (Source: Reeves County Emergency Management.)

The Texas Department of Public Safety closed the eastbound lanes of I-20. Emergency responders from the Wickett Volunteer Fire Department and Monahans Volunteer Fire Department arrived on-scene and extinguished the fire.

National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigators have collected photos and documentation from the accident. The NTSB's investigation is ongoing. Future investigative activity will focus on the types of hazardous materials that were shipped; Lucid Motors USA, Inc., packaging procedures for lithium-ion batteries; FedEx Freight loading procedures for hazardous materials; and a review of the accident response.

Parties to this investigation include the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration; FedEx Freight; Lucid Motors USA, Inc.; the Texas Department of Public Safety; the Monahans Volunteer Fire Department; and the Wickett Volunteer Fire Department.