

## Vigesaa, Donald W.

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**From:** Mcbeth, Amy G <Amy.Mcbeth@BNSF.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 19, 2021 10:02 AM  
**To:** Vigesaa, Donald W.  
**Subject:** BNSF Railway - safety inspection information

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Chair Vigesaa:

As the state's railroad safety inspection program is discussed, I thought it would be helpful to provide some information on how BNSF continues leveraging our own inspection processes and technology improvements to help significantly improve our reliability and safety. We have a vested interest in ensuring our infrastructure is sound and we can safely operate in North Dakota communities. I'm new in this role for BNSF, but have worked on community rail issues in the state for several years and I look forward to working with you.

We compared 2015 with 2019 and 2020 to help demonstrate our commitment to safe and reliable infrastructure. Here are a couple of highlights:

### Automated Inspections

BNSF Railway utilizes a variety of geometry test trains and vehicles to test our tracks. We have found that this gives us a more accurate measurement as these vehicles are able to load (put weight on) the track structure as well as utilize precise measurements at smaller intervals of space. In leveraging these technologies, we have also found that as our utilization of these vehicles increases, our defect rates decrease. The increased test miles in North Dakota alone has cut the defect rate to less than half of what it was in 2019.

The miles tested by these automated systems and associated defect rates for North Dakota are below.

Metric	Year		
	2015	2019	2020
North Dakota Miles Tested (All Track Types)	9,380	14,057	23,212
North Dakota Defects per 100 Miles Tested (All Track Types)	12.33	5.33	2.32

### BNSF Track Inspectors

BNSF Railway also invests in a robust track inspection program where our inspectors have gone through specialized training to identify and protect our tracks based on both FRA defect definitions as well as more stringent BNSF track standards. In 2020 alone, our track inspectors in North Dakota inspected 247,871 miles of track and identified 1,199 defects for remediation.

Through our many track inspectors at work in the state and their expertise, and our continued leveraging of technology we continue to improve our safety record and lead the industry in our efforts. We're proud of the role we play in North Dakota's economy today and into the future.

I hope this information is helpful to you, and please reach out to me or Kayla Effertz Kleven and John Olson who work with me if you ever have any questions. Thank you.

Amy McBeth