



At a Glance

Catalyst for Improving the Environment

Why We Did This Review

We conducted this review to determine the extent to which recipients adhere to closed safety recommendations issued by the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB).

Background

The Clean Air Amendments of 1990 authorized CSB to be established, to investigate accidents, and determine the conditions or circumstances that led to an event in an effort to prevent future occurrences. Since it was established in 1998, through 2006, CSB issued 379 safety recommendations. The CSB has closed 164 safety recommendations directed to facilities, corporations, trade associations, and State and Federal agencies.

For further information, contact our Office of Congressional and Public Liaison at (202) 566-2391.

To view the full report, click on the following link:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2007/20070326-2007-P-00010.pdf

U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board Should Track Adherence to Closed Recommendations

What We Found

Recipients have continued to adhere to closed recommendations issued by CSB. Recipients cited various reasons for doing so. Most said they addressed closed recommendations because they made sense and it was the right thing to do.

Although CSB has continued to increase its investigative productivity, it does not conduct followup on closed recommendations to track adherence. As a result, CSB may be unaware of whether report recipients continue to adhere to recommended safety procedures or return to prior practices. The CSB's guidance for developing and issuing recommendations requires followup on open recommendations, but is silent regarding closed recommendations. During our review, we received feedback from recommendation recipients pertaining to improving the recommendations process. Followup on closed recommendations would give CSB an opportunity to obtain feedback from its customers that could improve CSB's practices.

What We Recommend

We recommend that CSB (1) revise its guidance, Board Order 022, to include followup on closed recommendations and (2) follow up on a sample of closed recommendations every 3 years and analyze whether adherence and/or recipient conditions have changed. CSB concurred with our recommendations; however, it did not address the frequency of analyzing closed recommendations as we suggested. Per Office of Management and Budget Circular A-50, we expect that CSB's response to these recommendations will contain an action plan, with milestones, that will specify the size and frequency of closed recommendation followup. We included CSB's complete response in Appendix B.