



U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board



THE CHAIRMAN'S FY 2021 IMPACT REPORT





Katherine A. Lemos, PhD
Chairman and CEO

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) has successfully carried out its core mission work in FY21. As Chairman, I am extremely proud to present our Impact Report.

During the FY21 fiscal year the CSB continued to deploy to chemical incidents, issue final reports, advance investigations, close on a record number of critical safety recommendations, and release safety videos.

In addition, we have made significant progress in hiring and training a diverse team of investigators distributed throughout the nation, and in building upon the executive leadership at the CSB.

Even through the pandemic, following our COVID Safety Plan, the CSB has continued to efficiently deploy to meet our mission. We continue to prioritize the safety of our employees as we have adopted a more agile investigative model. That includes implementing a wide range of investigative products that can reach the community in a timely manner. Additionally, the CSB's reporting rule allows us to quickly capture data on incidents that meet our specific criteria which ensures efficient use of our resources.

Since beginning my term as Chairman in late April of 2020, I have continued to engage heavily with stakeholders and our federal counterparts to communicate the CSB's vision and promote action on the agency's Critical Driver's List (CDL). Through participation in committee meetings, symposiums and conferences, delivering keynote presentations, accepting media interviews, visiting refineries, and discussing safety assessment processes, I have reached a wide spectrum of communities across the chemical industry.

In FY22, I look forward to an even more productive set of outcomes, as we work transparently and with accountability.

Our top priorities are to:

- Advocate for safety by releasing high quality accident investigations the community
- Prevent the recurrence of significant chemical incidents
- Maintain an engaged and high-performing workforce

I look forward to working with my team to accomplish these goals.



FY 2021 DEPLOYMENTS

LyondellBasell Fatal Chemical Release

Location: La Porte, TX

Incident Occurred On: 07/27/2021

Yenkin-Majestic Paint and OPC Polymers Corporation

Location: Columbus, OH

Incident Occurred On: 4/08/2021

Foundation Food Group Fatal Chemical Release

Location: Gainesville, GA

Incident Occurred On: 1/28/2021

Optima Belle LLC Explosion and Fire

Location: Belle, WV

Incident Occurred On: 12/08/2020

Wacker Polysilicon Chemical Release

Location: Charleston, TN

Incident Occurred On: 11/13/2020

RECOMMENDATIONS

In FY 2021, the CSB:

- ★ VOTED ON **47** RECOMMENDATION STATUS CHANGES
- ★ CLOSED **41** recommendations **28** OF WHICH were closed ACCEPTABLY
- ★ ADVANCED **6** recommendations
- ★ ISSUED **20** New Safety Recommendations
- ★ **86%** of the agency's recommendations are closed

28 RECOMMENDATIONS
SUCCESSFULLY
CLOSED

In total, the CSB has issued 861 safety recommendations of which 742 are closed. These recommendations have been issued to federal, state and local regulators and entities, as well as associations and private industry. In FY21, the CSB issued 20 new safety recommendations, in comparison to zero for FY20. In addition, a major focus of the CSB in FY21 has been advancing and closing previously issued recommendations. This is a key driver to realizing positive safety change.

In FY21, the CSB's Board voted on 47 recommendation status changes, 41 of those were closed, 28 of which were acceptable.

In FY20, the CSB voted on only 15 recommendation status changes, seven of which were advanced and eight were closed. This increase in productivity shows our commitment to our mission.

REPORT RELEASES

In FY 2021 the CSB released three investigation reports.

Aghorn Operating, Waterflood Station in Odessa Texas

In May of 2021, the CSB held its first virtual Board Meeting to release its investigation report into the October 2019 hydrogen sulfide release that fatally injured an Aghorn employee and his spouse who attempted to locate him at



Animation still from the Aghorn Operating Waterflood Station in Odessa, Texas

the facility after he did not return home. The CSB's final report details 6 key safety issues and issues safety recommendations to the company as well as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Railroad Commission of Texas.

Chemical Reaction, Hydrogen Release, Explosion, and Fire at AB Specialty Silicones

On September 24, 2021, at a virtual Board Meeting, the Board approved and voted to adopt the investigation report on the AB Specialty Silicones, LLC, Fatal Explosion and Fire that occurred on May 3, 2019, in Waukegan, IL. This reactive chemical incident fatally injured four workers. The CSB's report includes ten safety issues as well as three safety recommendations to the company.



The aftermath of the explosion and fire at the AB Specialty Silicones plant in Waukegan, IL.



A portion of the fire at the Evergreen Packaging Mill in Canton, NC.

Fire During Hot Work at Evergreen Packaging Paper Mill

The CSB Board also approved a second investigation report at the September 24, 2021, virtual Board Meeting. The investigation report examined a September 20, 2020 fire that occurred at the Evergreen Packaging Mill in Canton, NC. The incident took place during a scheduled maintenance event which resulted in a fire. Two contract workers were fatally injured as a result of the incident. The CSB's final report includes five safety issues, and recommendations to the company, OSHA, as well as the contractor involved in the incident.

SAFETY VIDEOS

The CSB develops safety videos which summarize the important safety issues, recommendations and findings from our incident investigations. CSB videos also include 3D animations which recreate the events leading to an incident.

CSB videos are on our website and on YouTube for public viewing. In FY 2021, the CSB released one safety video and a message from the Chairman.

The CSB's safety video titled "Silent Killer: Hydrogen Sulfide Release in Odessa, Texas" includes a new animation of the events leading up to the Aghorn incident, and interviews with both the CSB's Chairperson and the Supervisory Investigator for this investigation. To date, the CSB's video has received over 352,000 views since its release in July of 2021.

The CSB also released a "Message from the Chairperson" which outlined agency priorities as well as released improvements in agency transparency, which has been a continued priority for the Chairman.



Animation still from “Silent Killer: Hydrogen Sulfide Release in Odessa, Texas.”



Release of a “Message from the Chairperson” outlining the agency’s accomplishments and priorities

In the video, Dr. Lemos closes by emphasizing her commitment to agency stakeholders, “Though we must remain true to our mission in conducting and issuing independent and objective analysis and recommendations, it is important to consider the expertise, knowledge and priorities of our stakeholder community.”

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

In FY21, CSB made a commitment to increased transparency. We have demonstrated this through initiating virtual Board Meetings upon completion of investigations. This provides the public with insight into the staff’s investigative process, the facts and analysis, conclusions, and recommendations. Further, the Board’s deliberation occurs in real time.

In FY21, utilizing this new transparency process, we completed three investigations: Aghorn, AB Specialty Silicones and Evergreen Packaging. This compares to only one completed investigation in FY20. Many of the CSB’s investigations are featured on our YouTube Channel, which addresses our mandate for outreach and education.

In FY 2021 the CSB also held four virtual Sunshine Act Board Business Meetings which allowed the public to hear updates on the agency’s activities.

On September 29, 2021, Dr. Katherine A. Lemos, testified before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Energy and Commerce which held a hybrid hearing that included both in-person and remote attendance.

Full committee Chairman, Frank Pallone (NJ), set the tone and said, “In my view, getting the CSB back to functioning at the highest level is the first step. The goal of today’s hearing is to help get CSB back on track, and I hope that we can all come together to revitalize this critical agency.”

Throughout the hearing, Chairman Lemos advocated for additional resources for the CSB and emphasized the ongoing progress which has been made throughout her tenure as Chairman and CEO.



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ONLINE OUTREACH



YouTube

@USCSB: The CSB's safety videos have totaled over 36 million views with more than 190,000 subscribers



Twitter

@chemsafetyboard: more than 8,900 followers



Facebook

@US Chemical Safety Board:
more than 15,400 likes and 16,700 followers



Website - www.csb.gov

Our website provides information on investigations, status of recommendations and information on Board activities.