U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

Memorandum

To: Board Members

From: Steven Messer
Acting General Counsel

Cc: Charles Barbee
Adam Henson
Leadership Team

Subject: Board Action Report – Notation Item 2025-78 | Recommendation to Bio-Lab Lake Charles (2020-05-I-LA-R1) from the Bio-Lab Lake Charles Chemical Fire and Release investigation (2020-05-I-LA)

Date: September 8, 2025

On September 6, 2025, the Board approved Notation Item 2025-78, thereby designating Recommendation 2020-05-I-LA-R1 to Bio-Lab Lake Charles from the Bio-Lab Lake Charles Chemical Fire and Release investigation (2020-05-I-LA) with the status of Closed – Acceptable Action.

Voting Summary – Notation Item 2025-78

Disposition: APPROVED

Disposition date: September 6, 2025

	Approve	Disapprove	Calendar	Not Participating	Date
S. Johnson	**X**				9/5/2025
S. Owens	**X**				9/6/2025

U. S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board
RECOMMENDATION STATUS CHANGE SUMMARY

Report:	Bio-Lab Lake Charles Chemical Fire and Release
Recommendation Number:	2020-05-I-LA-R1
Date Issued:	April 24, 2023
Recipient:	Bio-Lab Lake Charles
New Status:	Closed – Acceptable Action
Date of Status Change:	September 6, 2025

Recommendation Text:

Evaluate the hazards to the Bio-Lab Lake Charles facility from hurricanes and accompanying wind, rainwater, floodwater, or storm surge forces. Implement processes and safeguards for protection against those hazards, such as through:

a. *Constructing new and maintaining existing buildings and structures to withstand hurricane winds and flooding, with a particular focus on those containing hazardous materials;*

b. *Implementing safeguards and processes to ensure hazardous chemicals are not compromised and released during extreme weather events; and*

c. *Following the guidance presented in the Center for Chemical Process Safety Monograph Assessment of and Planning for Natural Hazards.*

Board Status Change Decision:

A. Rationale for Recommendation

On August 27, 2020, extreme winds from Category 4 Hurricane Laura caused severe damage to multiple buildings and structures storing trichloroisocyanuric acid (TCCA) at the Bio-Lab, Inc. Lake Charles (Bio-Lab) facility in Westlake, Louisiana. Once the buildings at the Bio-Lab facility were damaged, rainwater made contact with the TCCA stored inside and initiated a chemical reaction and the subsequent decomposition of the TCCA. The resulting heat initiated a fire, and the decomposition reaction released a large plume of hazardous gases, including toxic chlorine.

The plume was seen over a large portion of the nearby community. As a result, the Calcasieu Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness issued a shelter-in-place order. Additionally, a portion of the nearby Interstate 10 was closed for over 28 hours. Fortunately, there were no injuries reported from this incident. The Bio-Lab facility resumed production operations in March of 2023 following an approximately $250 million redesign and reconstruction effort.

The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) investigated the incident and found several safety issues including ineffective preparation for extreme weather, process hazard analysis implementation, and emergency planning, preparedness, and response, as well as the lack of adherence to applicable hazardous materials codes. As a result of these findings, the CSB issued four recommendations to Bio-Lab Lake Charles. This status change summary addresses CSB Recommendation No. 2020-05-I-LA-R1.

B. Response to the Recommendation

Bio-Lab has notified the CSB that they have analyzed the hurricane related hazards at their Lake Charles facility and have designed the buildings of their rebuilt facility to withstand such hazards. Upon review of the documentation submitted by Bio-Lab, the CSB concluded that Bio-Lab has met the objective of the recommendation.

C. Board Analysis and Decision

Based upon the information above, the Board voted to change CSB Recommendation Nos. 2020-05-I-LA-R1 to: "Closed – Acceptable Action."