



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 2025-88 | Recommendation to Didion Milling, Inc. (2017-07-I-WI-R9) from the Didion Milling Company Explosion and Fire investigation (2017-07-I-WI)

Date: September 19, 2025

On September 19, 2025, the Board approved Notation Item 2025-88, thereby designating Recommendation 2017-07-I-WI-R9 to Didion Milling, Inc. from the Didion Milling Company Explosion and Fire investigation (2017-07-I-WI) with the status of Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action.

Voting Summary – Notation Item 2025-88

Disposition: APPROVED

Disposition date: September 19, 2025

	Approve	Disapprove	Calendar	Not Participating	Date
S. Johnson	X				9/17/2025
S. Owens	X				9/19/2025



U. S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

RECOMMENDATION STATUS CHANGE SUMMARY

Report:	Didion Milling Company Explosion and Fire
Recommendation Number:	2017-07-I-WI-R9
Date Issued:	December 6, 2023
Recipient:	Didion Milling, Inc.
New Statuses:	Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action
Date of Status Changes:	September 19, 2025

Recommendation Text:

Contract a competent third party to develop and implement a process safety leadership and culture program, based on the guidance of the CCPS's Guidelines for Auditing Process Safety Management Systems and Process Safety: Leadership from the Boardroom to the Frontline. The program should include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- a. A process safety policy;*
- b. A process safety leadership and culture committee;*
- c. Appropriate goals for process safety;*
- d. A commitment to process safety culture;*
- e. Leading and lagging process safety metrics;*
- f. Process Safety Culture Assessments; and,*
- g. Engagement with external process safety leadership and culture experts.*

Board Status Change Decision:

A. Rationale for Recommendation

On May 31, 2017, an explosion and fire occurred at the Didion Milling, Inc. (Didion) facility in Cambria, Wisconsin. The fire spread throughout the facility resulting in multiple combustible dust explosions both within and external to the production equipment.

Five employees of Didion were fatally injured as a result of the incident. An additional 14 employees were injured. Several of the fatalities and injuries were caused by exposure to the flames generated by the combustible dust explosions and flash fires, while others can be attributed to the collapse of the buildings. The incident resulted in an estimated \$15.37 million in property damage.

The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) investigated the incident and found several safety issues including ineffective combustible dust safety management, ineffective process safety leadership, and a lack of regulatory coverage for combustible dusts. As a result of these findings, the CSB issued nine recommendations to Didion Milling, Inc. (Didion). This status change summary addresses CSB Recommendation No. 2017-07-I-WI-R9.

B. Response to the Recommendation

Didion has not implemented the recommendation as written but has instead established their own full-time safety and environmental staff including a vice president and director level positions and implemented a new safety and health management system. Didion's safety and health management system was designed in accordance with current guidance applicable to facilities such as theirs and includes a robust auditing system. The CSB reviewed a copy of Didion's safety and health management system and related documentation. The CSB determined that Didion's actions post incident are an acceptable alternative that meets the objective of the recommendation.

C. Board Analysis and Decision

Based upon the information above, the Board voted to change CSB Recommendation No. 2017-07-I-WI-R9 to: "Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action."