



# U. S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

## RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS CHANGE

### SUMMARY

<b>Report:</b>	West Fertilizer Fire and Explosion
<b>Recommendation Number(s):</b>	2013-2-I-TX-R3
<b>Date Issued:</b>	January 28, 2016
<b>Recipient:</b>	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
<b>New Status:</b>	Closed-Unacceptable Action/No Response Received
<b>Date of Status Change:</b>	March 29, 2019

#### **Recommendation Text 2013-2-I-TX-R3:**

*Revise the Risk Management Program rule to include fertilizer grade ammonium nitrate (FGAN) at an appropriate threshold quantity on the List of Regulated Substances.*

- a. *Ensure that the calculation for the offsite consequence analysis considers the unique explosive characteristics of FGAN explosions to determine the endpoint for explosive effects and overpressure levels. Examples of such analyses include that adopted by the 2014 Fire Protection Research Foundation report, "Separation Distances in NFPA Codes and Standards," Great Britain's Health and Safety Executive, and other technical guidance.*
- b. *Develop Risk Management Program rule guidance document(s) for regulated FGAN facilities.*

#### **Board Status Change Decision:**

##### A. Rationale for Recommendation

On April 17, 2013, an explosion and fire occurred at the West Fertilizer Company (WFC), a fertilizer blending, retail, and distribution facility in West, Texas. The violent detonation of fertilizer grade ammonium nitrate (FGAN) fatally injured 12 emergency responders and three members of the public. Local hospitals treated more than 260 injured victims, many of whom required hospital admission. The blast destroyed the WFC facility and caused widespread damage to more than 150 offsite buildings.

As a part of its investigation, the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) analyzed relevant regulatory, industry, and consensus standards for hazard analysis, and safe storage and handling of FGAN. The CSB determined that these regulations and standards did not adequately protect the public from a catastrophic FGAN explosion. As a result, the CSB made three recommendations to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

##### B. Response to the Recommendation

EPA did not address FGAN in its final amendments to the Risk Management Program (RMP) regulation, which were adopted on January 13, 2017. EPA stated to the CSB it plans no immediate action with respect to this recommendation.

C. Board Analysis and Decision

Based on EPA's response and the lack of FGAN coverage in the RMP final rule, the Board voted to change the status of Recommendation No. 2013-2-I-TX-R3 to **“Closed-Unacceptable Action/No Response Received.”**

**The CSB will draft a petition to EPA under 40 CFR § 68.120 to add FGAN as a substance to the list of regulated substances.**