



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

Report:	West Fertilizer Fire and Explosion
Recommendation Number(s):	2013-2-I-TX-R16
Date Issued:	January 28, 2016
Recipient:	Texas A&M Engineering Extension Services (TEEX)
New Status:	Closed – Acceptable Action
Date of Status Change:	October 11, 2018

Recommendation Text 2013-2-I-TX-R16:

Develop an outreach program that notifies state, regional, and local fire departments about available FGAN training opportunities. The program should include the following elements:

- a. Guidance for fire departments on how to identify FGAN and other recognized hazards associated with other hazardous materials or chemicals within their communities by engaging with State Emergency Response Commissions and Local Emergency Planning Committees.*
- b. Promotion of use of the hazardous materials training module with TEEX training partners.*

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 completely 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) found that both Federal and the state of Texas curriculum manuals used for hazardous materials (HAZMAT) training and certification of firefighters placed little emphasis on emergency response to storage sites containing FGAN. In addition, lessons learned from previous FGAN-related fires were not shared with other fire departments, including the West Volunteer Fire Department. If previous lessons learned had been applied at West, the firefighters and emergency personnel who responded to the incident might have better understood the risks associated with FGAN-related fire. As a result, the CSB made two recommendations to the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Services (TEEX). This status change summary pertains only to Recommendation No. 2013-02-I-TX-R16.

B. Response to the Recommendation

TEEX developed and offers a comprehensive FGAN training program to emergency responders free of charge that addresses the content identified in the CSB's recommendation. Ten Regional Training Managers provide the training throughout the State, and TEEX promotes this training online on their website and through the Texas Division of Emergency Management/Preparing Texas website.

C. Board Analysis and Decision

As TEEX has met the intent of the recommendation, the CSB voted to change the status of Recommendation No. 2013-2-I-TX-R16 to **“Closed-Acceptable Action.”**