



U. S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

RECOMMENDATION STATUS CHANGE SUMMARY

Report:	Didion Milling Company Explosion and Fire
Recommendation Numbers:	2017-07-I-WI-R3
Date Issued:	December 6, 2023
Recipient:	Didion Milling, Inc.
New Statuses:	Closed – Acceptable Action
Date of Status Changes:	August 6, 2026

Recommendation Text:

Contract a competent third party to perform dust hazard analyses (DHAs) on all buildings and units that process combustible dust. Ensure that the DHAs are revalidated at least every five years. Implement pre-deflagration detection, deflagration venting, deflagration suppression, deflagration isolation, and deflagration pressure containment engineering controls identified in the initial and revalidation DHA in accordance with NFPA 61, Standard for the Prevention of Fires and Dust Explosions in Agricultural and Food Processing Facilities, NFPA 68, Standard on Explosion Protection by Deflagration Venting, NFPA 69, Standard on Explosion Prevention Systems, and NFPA 652, Standard on the Fundamentals of Combustible Dust.

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-R3.

B. Response to the Recommendation

Didion performed a dust hazard analysis (DHA) on all buildings and units that process combustible dust with the assistance of a third party. Didion has also adopted a policy requiring

DHAs to be reviewed or repeated every five years at a minimum. Based on their DHA, Didion implemented engineered safeguards, such as those listed in the recommendation, relevant to the combustible dust hazards of their facility in accordance with applicable NFPA standards. Upon review of the relevant documentation provided, the CSB determined that Didion has satisfactorily implemented this recommendation.

C. Board Analysis and Decision

Based upon the information above, the Board voted to change CSB Recommendation No. 2017-07-I-WI-R3 to: “Closed – Acceptable Action.”