



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-R4
Date Issued:	December 6, 2023
Recipient:	Didion Milling, Inc.
New Statuses:	Closed – Acceptable Action
Date of Status Changes:	March 16, 2026

Recommendation Text:

Contract a competent third party to assess and implement engineering controls for the structural design and venting requirements of the reconstructed facility to ensure they meet the requirements and guidance in NFPA 68, Standard on Explosion Protection by Deflagration Venting, for adequacy of venting capacity.

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-R4.

B. Response to the Recommendation

Didion designed and rebuilt their facility with the help of several third parties. The engineering controls for the structural design and venting requirements of the reconstructed facility are in accordance with NFPA 68. 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-R4 to: “Closed – Acceptable Action.”