



# U. S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

## RECOMMENDATION STATUS CHANGE

### SUMMARY

<b>Report:</b>	Evergreen Packaging Mill – Fire During Hot Work
<b>Recommendation Number:</b>	2020-07-I-NC-R2
<b>Date Issued:</b>	September 24, 2021
<b>Recipient:</b>	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
<b>New Status:</b>	Open - Awaiting Response or Evaluation/Approval of Response
<b>Date of Status Change:</b>	

#### Recommendation Text:

*Require Owner/Operators to ensure the coordination of simultaneous operations involving multiple work groups, including contractors. Include in the requirement for Owner/Operators to ensure the following activities occur:*

- *Identification of potential simultaneous operations*
- *Identification of potential hazardous interactions*
- *Evaluation and implementation of necessary safeguards to allow for safe simultaneous operations*
- *Coordination, including shared communication methods, between the simultaneous operations*
- *Inclusion of emergency response personnel or services in the planning and coordination of the simultaneous operations*

*As necessary, seek the regulatory authority to promulgate this requirement.*

#### Board Status Change Decision:

##### A. Rationale for Recommendation

On September 21, 2020, a paper mill operated by Evergreen Packaging (Evergreen) in Canton, North Carolina, was undergoing a planned shutdown, and associated maintenance and capital project work was ongoing throughout the facility. In one of Evergreen's pulp bleaching units, two contract companies were performing simultaneous maintenance work inside two connected process vessels, called an "upflow tower" and a "downflow tower," when a fire started inside the upflow tower after an electric heat gun, which was being used to warm resin, fell into a five-gallon bucket containing the flammable resin. The fire fatally injured two contractors.

The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) investigated the incident and found that the workers did not recognize or control the ignition hazard presented by the electric heat gun. The CSB also found that the contractors did not effectively coordinate simultaneous entry operations and did not have a shared communication method. In addition, Evergreen did not have a simultaneous operations program in place at the time of the incident to facilitate coordination between parties performing work close together in time and place. The CSB concluded that a regulatory requirement for Owner/Operators to ensure the coordination of simultaneous operations involving multiple work groups, including contractors, would improve worker safety in industry.

As a result of the investigation, the CSB issued two new recommendations to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). This status change summary pertains to **CSB Recommendation No. 2020-07-I-NC-R2**.