OSHA Combustible Dust NEP Inadequacies

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Abstract

Since the OSHA Combustible Dust National Emphasis Program directive was reissued in 2008 immediately following the catastrophic Imperial Sugar Refinery dust explosion there’s been over 150+ combustible dust related fires and explosions in the manufacturing, non-manufacturing, and utility sectors. The Combustible Dust Policy Institute has found that over 50% of these incidents occurred in national industries not referenced in the OSHA Dust NEP. Researching news media accounts and interviews with fire department officials following combustible dust incidents provides a better overall understanding of the probability of occurrence and severity of combustible dust related fires and explosions occurring in national industries not listed in the OSHA Dust NEP. With this essential information trends begin to emerge concerning specific sectors where incidents are repeatedly occurring in industries not referenced in the NEP. Subsequently, with this data, appropriate preventative and mitigative control measures can be directed in addressing combustible dust hazards throughout the nation’s industrial sectors. The OSHA Combustible Dust NEP must be revised so as to include all national industries that have a history of frequent incidents instead of the current deficiencies in the NEP directive.

Keywords
OSHA Combustible Dust National Emphasis Program, Combustible Dust Policy Institute, dust explosion, combustible dust, manufacturing sector, non-manufacturing sector, utility sector, combustible dust fire, news media, fire department officials, prevention, mitigation, control measures, Imperial Sugar Refinery