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## **CSB RELEASES NEW SAFETY VIDEO, “COMBUSTIBLE DUST: AN INSIDIOUS HAZARD” FEATURES THREE NEW ANIMATIONS OF MAJOR DUST ACCIDENTS, SHOWS NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE STANDARD AND IMPROVED SAFETY PRACTICES**

Washington, DC, July 28, 2009 – The U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) today released a new safety video depicting how accumulations of combustible dust at worksites can provide the fuel for devastating explosions that kill and maim workers, shut down plants, and harm local economies.

Entitled, “Combustible Dust: An Insidious Hazard,” the new video is available online at [www.CSB.gov](http://www.CSB.gov), and on [YouTube](#). It can also be ordered free of charge on a new two-DVD set of all © CSB safety videos by filling out the CSB’s online [DVD request form](#).



“Combustible Dust” features all-new CSB computer animations which illustrate three major dust explosion accidents the CSB has investigated: West Pharmaceutical Services in Kinston, North Carolina; CTA Acoustics in Corbin, Kentucky; and Hayes Lemmerz International, in Huntington, Indiana.

For each accident, the animations show how explosive dust accumulated over years on plant equipment, pipes, floors, ducts, dust collectors, and other areas. The video shows how conditions develop needing only an ignition source to set off a primary explosion, which lofts the accumulated dust, leading to deadlier secondary explosions.

News footage and still photographs depict actual damage caused by these explosions, as well as other accidents including last year’s tragedy which killed 14 workers at the Imperial Sugar Company in Port Wentworth, Georgia.

“No company wants to see its facility blown up and destroyed and its employees killed,” CSB Chairman John Bresland says in the video. “But they just don’t understand what the hazard is, they don’t realize that they have a hazard here, until that one day when the explosion occurs, and it’s a terrible tragedy for them. And they look back and say, ‘If we’d only known.’”

The video points out that dust accumulations – and the resulting secondary dust explosions – can be readily prevented. National Fire Protection Association standards have long been available to general industry and, if followed, will prevent such accidents, as NFPA official Amy Beasley Spencer states in the video.

The video features comments by the CSB investigators who led each of the accident investigations, as well as Angela Blair, who led the CSB study resulting in a comprehensive CSB report on dust hazards in 2006. The report identified 281 fires and explosions that had occurred over the previous 25 years. “What is so frustrating about dust explosions is that they’re so preventable,” Ms. Blair said.

Combustible-dust expert James Dahn appears in the video to warn companies against complacency: “I mean we’ve been operating for 40 years and never had a problem,” Mr. Dahn states. “That kind of logic is one that can guarantee you will get into trouble.”

Laboratory footage in the video depicts how easily combustible dust ignites, as a small dust sample gathered by investigators in the rubble of a dust explosion site is lofted over a flame and creates an instant fireball.

Chairman Bresland said the CSB hopes the video will be viewed across general industry – in all facilities where combustible dust may be generated in the manufacturing process. “It is our hope,” the chairman said, “that company executives, safety managers, and labor groups will take 29 minutes to view this video and ask themselves, ‘Could this happen at our operation?’ And then take action to eliminate dust hazards from their facilities.”

In the video, Mr. Bresland calls for action to prevent dust explosions, saying, “We need education. We need industry to understand what the hazards are. We need regulation. We need a comprehensive combustible dust regulation, and we need enforcement of the regulation.”

Tammy Miser, who lost her brother Shawn Boone in the dust explosion in Indiana, agreed: “The only way to keep my brother from dying in vain would be to make changes. And if there’s not a change made, well then you know it’s going to happen again.”

The CSB is an independent federal agency charged with investigating industrial chemical accidents. The agency's board members are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. CSB investigations look into all aspects of chemical accidents, including physical causes such as equipment failure as well as inadequacies in regulations, industry standards, and safety management systems.

The Board does not issue citations or fines but does make safety recommendations to plants, industry organizations, labor groups, and regulatory agencies such as OSHA and EPA. Visit our website, [www.csb.gov](http://www.csb.gov).

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