



Safety Tip of the Week

The 3 “C”s of Combustible Dust

Combustible dust is finely separated or divided dust that poses a fire or explosion hazard when suspended in air in the right concentrations. Even some materials that would not burn normally can burn in dust form. The particles must be small enough to float in the air, and the material must be able to burn and create heat to be defined as combustible dust. The particles can be set off by an oxidizing medium, or the presence of oxygen.



The 3 “C”s of Combustible Dust

To avoid incidents, the dust must be controlled through three steps: Capture, Contain, and Clean.

Capture: First, the work facility should have adequate dust collection systems to keep the dust from entering into work areas. These systems must be properly designed, approved, and maintained.

Contain: Second, equipment should be in operation that contains the dust within safe confines, whether that be a room or bag. However, whatever containment unit is used must be safe to hold and store combustible dust.

Clean: Work areas, overhead surfaces, and concealed spaces should be cleaned frequently. This is considered regular housekeeping to keep the dust to a minimum. If there is a lot of dust to be cleaned daily, steps should be taken to improve the capture and containment systems.

Workplace Precautions

Employers should be aware of the presence of combustible dust in the workplace and determine if it is explosible. If so, they should have an incident action plan and provide safety training to employees to be prepared for an emergency incident.

CAPTURE, CONTAIN, AND CLEAN...TO PREVENT COMBUSTIBLE DUST!