

# MANUFACTURING SAFETY ALERT

Ask Yourself  
“Could it happen here?”

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

**Sawmill Damaged by Fire When Hog Fuel Ignited**  
Notice of WSBC incident number: 2016173460016

A smoldering summer hog fire was put out by some workers dousing it with water from a hose, however, a piece of burning wood (firebrand) travelled up an outfeed conveyor. The conveyors were stopped, and a worker was sent to put out this fire

Ten minutes later, a second fire started in the pile of hog fuel, near the top of one of the outfeed conveyors. The workers were unable to stop the fire from spreading due to high summer winds.

Another hog fuel conveyor caught fire and the flames were spread to several piles of wood waste products and structures. The mill sustained significant damage as a result of multiple fires. No workers were injured.

## SUGGESTED ACTIONS

**From the investigation:**

### **Cause**

- The original fire started as a result of *inadequate machine maintenance* creating friction between the rotating equipment and trapped wood waste in the hog. Summer fires in the hog occurred routinely and were dealt with when detected by spraying water from a hose.

### **Contributing factors**

- Failure to adequately control the accumulation of hog fuel accumulating inside the hog and building, between the two conveyor outfeed belts, and in the yard contributed to this incident.
- *Inadequate* fire response procedures and fire response training of the mill workers caused the small fires to spread.



## MOST IMPORTANT TAKE AWAY

Ensure that appropriate housekeeping activities take place throughout the year to minimize accumulations of combustibles in all areas including the yard.

Provide workers with the basic skills to fight fires, monitor for the fire spreading and knowing when to call the fire department to extinguish a fire that is getting out of control.

**MAG**  
Manufacturing Advisory Group



BC Forest Safety

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