



## Risk Control

# Selecting a Dust Hazard Analysis Provider

Per an update to NFPA 652, it is now mandatory to complete a Dust Hazard Analysis (DHA) for existing processes and facilities. This update includes new requirements for various process equipment like air moving devices (AMDs), air materials separators (AMS), duct systems and bulk storage enclosures.

A DHA is a critical step to protect your employees and prevent tragic accidents that can severely damage your facilities. An effective DHA includes information to classify and quantify the material(s) as combustible dust. One of the most important aspects of the DHA is specific recommendations to manage the identified hazards and the residual effects or secondary hazards. Recommendations should be as specific as possible and prioritized according to the severity and probability of the hazard.

There are many “combustible dust experts” out there selling DHA services. True experts should evaluate your receiving, storage, use, processing and disposal of all “powder” materials. Their evaluation should also include existing dust management programs, handling practices, equipment, fire/explosion suppression systems, warning devices and onsite extinguishing capabilities.

### Factors to consider when selecting a DHA provider include:

#### Vendor Qualifications

- What level of experience does the provider have with completing DHAs? Do they have a dedicated team or division for combustible dust-related services? Is this the provider's specialty, or do they primarily operate in general health and safety or other engineering disciplines?
- Does the DHA provider have experience evaluating these hazards in your specific industry? Will they assist with the collection and explosibility assessment of dust samples?

- Does the DHA provider sell equipment? To prevent bias in recommendations, consider DHA providers that are independent and are not manufacturer representatives or partnered with equipment vendors.

#### Proposal Review

- Does the proposal reference compliance standards to be used in the exposure assessment?
- The proposal should clearly outline the process and methodology for evaluating fire, deflagration and explosion hazards, from generation to collection and all process equipment.
- Ask for a sample report to confirm that recommendations are tailored to the operations and not generalized statements from consensus standards. Effective mitigation plans require customized and hazard-specific recommendations.
- Some DHA providers sell equipment as a manufacturer's representative and may offer a low DHA price in exchange for the chance to provide recommendations for the equipment they sell. This may result in biased mitigation options.

#### Post-DHA Support

- Does the DHA report have a mechanism to track action items and project plans to help manage the recommendations?
- Does the DHA provider offer unbiased consultation assistance in the selection and implementation of explosion protection controls and ongoing mitigation solutions related to the safety and maintenance of the operations?

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