

# Tool Box Meeting Guide

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## Combustible dust and your right to refuse unsafe work

- We must all do our part to minimize the risk of a combustible dust fire or explosion.
- Remember your right to refuse unsafe work. The regulations state that a person must not carry out work or cause others to carry out work if it's believed to endanger the health and safety of any person.
- Keep in mind that wood dust is considered an undue hazard if it potentially could cause an explosion.
- Keep an eye out for the following potential sources of explosion:
  - a dust cloud in the air
  - dust accumulations on floors and other surfaces that are one-eighth of an inch thick and more than five percent of a contained area
- Should you see a potentially explosive or combustible accumulation of dust, you must refuse to continue working. You must also immediately report this hazard to your supervisor or employer.
- Remember that all fine wood dust is potentially explosive — even dust generated from “wet wood” becomes potentially explosive once it settles and has time to dry.
- You'll need to regularly monitor and clean-up dust — not only primary dust accumulation areas on production floors, but also secondary areas of accumulation. These include cable trays, duct work, false ceilings, the space behind equipment, and other hidden places.
- You should know that manual cleaning, such as the use of compressed air, can be hazardous. When it's done incorrectly, it can disperse combustible dust into the air. If it becomes airborne near an ignition source in an enclosed area, it can cause an explosion.
- You'll need to pay special attention to hot work policies and procedures to ensure that hot work activities, such as cutting, welding, grinding, and others, will not ignite combustible material.

If a high concentration of wood dust becomes airborne and contacts an ignition source in a contained area, an explosion will likely occur.

## The role of your supervisor

- Once you have reported the hazard, your supervisor or employer must investigate it immediately. They will need to ensure the hazard is removed — without delay.

If you refuse to work under conditions that could lead to a combustible dust explosion, you are doing the right thing. Remember, you cannot be disciplined or fired from your job for putting safety first.

- In most cases, your supervisor or employer will be able to fix the problem. But, in instances where they decide no undue hazard exists, they are obliged to let you know. At that point, they are required to investigate the issue with you and one of the following other people:
  - A worker who is a member of your joint occupational health and safety committee
  - A worker selected by your union
  - Or, if you do not have a joint occupational health and safety committee or a union, any other worker that you select

## What to do next

If, after the joint investigation, the issue remains unresolved, you and your supervisor or employer must report the matter immediately to WorkSafeBC.

Make a list of ways you can improve safety at your mill.

For example, here at \_\_\_\_\_ [location], this is what we're doing to keep you safe:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Project			
Address		City	Province
Employer		Supervisor	
Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Time	Shift	
Number in crew		Number attending	

**Other safety issues or suggestions made by crew members**


**Record of those attending**

Name (please print)	Signature	Company
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		

Manager's remarks	
Manager's signature	Supervisor's signature