



U.S. CHEMICAL SAFETY BOARD

An independent federal agency investigating chemical accidents to protect workers, the public, and the environment.

CSB Announces Public Meeting in Louisville, KY to Release Final Report into the Fatal 2011 Fire and Explosion at Carbide Industries

Washington, DC, February 1, 2013 - Today the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) announced that it will hold a public meeting on February 7, 2013, to present the findings from its investigation into the March 21, 2011, fire and explosion that occurred at the Carbide Industries facility located in Louisville, KY. The plant produces calcium carbide, a chemical used industrially to produce acetylene gas for welding and other applications.

The accident fatally injured two workers and two others were injured when an electric arc furnace (EAF) over pressured and emitted powdered debris, hot gases, and molten calcium carbide. The hot gases and debris blown from the furnace broke through the double-pane reinforced glass window of the control room, severely burning the two workers inside; they died within 24 hours from burn injuries.

CSB Chairperson Rafael Moure-Eraso said, "I encourage workers and members of the public to attend the CSB's public meeting, which will present the formal findings and safety recommendations resulting from this accident., The CSB investigation revealed a number of prior incidents involving the electric arc furnace, but tragically these did not result in adequate safeguards being put in place for workers. The accident has important lessons for other operations using industrial furnaces."

The meeting will take place at The Seelbach Hilton, 500 Fourth Street, Louisville, KY in the Medallion E&F Salon at 6:30 p.m. EST.

The meeting will include a public comment period where members of the audience are encouraged to remark on the board's findings and recommendations. At the conclusion of the public comment period, the Board will consider whether to approve the final report and recommendations.

The Board meeting is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is encouraged but not required to attend the public meeting in person; to register for the event, please send email to publicmeeting@csb.gov. Members of the audience will have an opportunity to comment on the draft report and new safety recommendations, as presented by the investigative staff.

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.

For more information, contact Communications Director Hillary Cohen, (202) 261-3601, cell (202) 446-8094 email: hillary.cohen@csb.gov or Sandy Gilmour at (202) 251-5496 email: sandy.gilmour@csb.gov.