

## Tailgate talk

Today's Subject:

### **Combustible dust**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

At first glance, dust may seem harmless, but it has the potential to cause deadly explosions.

Combustible dust is any fine matter such as solid naturally occurring materials (sugar, wood, or grain), numerous metals (aluminum, iron, or zinc) and a few nonmetallic artificial substances (plastics or rubber). Dust explosions happen when airborne dust in tight areas ignites.

#### **What to focus on**

Here are three ways to help prevent dust explosions.

**1. Look for and clean up dust accumulation.** Fine materials can collect on horizontal surfaces or hidden areas such as roofs, ducts, or rafters. Be aware of concealed areas where dust can build up. Don't clean up dust with brooms or compressed air. Only use vacuums specified for dust collection.

**2. Be aware of ignition sources.** A dust explosion needs an ignition source such as fire, sparks, or ovens. Don't bring equipment or other ignition sources near areas with accumulated dust.

**3. Let your supervisor know.** Alert someone in charge if you see any areas with high levels of dust or possible ignition sources in high-dust areas.