

CHIP BIN FIRE

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Ensure you are looking for extension in the blowpipes, building and other bins. Use your TIC.
- Light smoke from the bin can be deceiving. Violent fire behavior is possible when contents are dumped out.
- Coordinate with onsite experts (Millwrights).
- Bag house fires are similar but offer additional challenges and risk – coordinate with facility staff.
- Blowpipes are engineered for the weight of the product they carry, not the weight of excessive water. Be mindful of the amount water you are spraying in blowpipes.

PROTOCOLS:

1. Provide Brief Arrival Report and begin 360°.
2. Size-up considerations:
 - How did the fire get into the bin?
 - How much material is in the bin?
 - What type of material is in the bin? (green vs. dry chips vs. sander dust)
 - Weather factors
 - What is the normal plan at this facility – what has worked in the past?
 - Fire extension
 - Fire on the outside of the bin?
3. Deploy initial hose lines to confine the fire to the bin; deal with extension or exposures first. Avoid using facility supplied hose lines whenever possible. **1 ¾” line is the minimum.** Consider a **2 ½”** line when potential fireball size or other conditions indicate a larger than normal event is possible.
4. Stretch lines to control the fire when dumping the bin.
 - Lines should be pulled to allow overlapping fog streams to cover the drive-through openings at the ends of the bin and encapsulate as much of the fireball as possible.
5. Stretch and staff a protection line for the firefighter assigned to operate the bin hydraulics.
 - **The clamshell is generally controlled hydraulically, usually from the cat-walk on the side of the bin. The controls often will make it difficult to “feather” the opening and can lead to a large release of product. Strongly consider manual overrides first.**
 - The Firefighter assigned to operate the controls shall utilize a SCBA and be “on-air” anytime they are on the catwalk regardless of how minor the incident seems.

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6. Consider placing an aerial stream to extinguish exterior fire or assist with water delivery into the top of the bin. Also consider the aerial for hand line operation to elevated blowpipe access points.
7. Consider stretching additional lines to the upper catwalk and opening the access hatches.
 - Get the correct wrenches from the Millwrights if possible. They will know the bolt size and pattern, etc.
8. Dump the bin while hose lines flow water onto the material. Waiting to open the hose line until fire is visible will often be too late. Washout the inside of the bin when empty to ensure no embers remain. **Limit runoff, saw dust mixed in water may clog the facility storm drains.**
9. Coordinate with onsite staff for the removal of the material on the ground. Remember that heavy equipment driving through the pile can agitate the material enough to cause another ignition. Closed cab machines are preferred and **provide a radio to the equipment operator.**
10. Depending on the severity of the incident we will push the management of the problem back to the facility as soon as possible and practical. Generally industry is quite capable of handling after the initial extinguishment efforts and the bin has been emptied.