

Smoldering Combustion in Hay Causes Dust Explosion in California Barn



Source: Google Maps

Date: August 23, 2020

Location: Arcata, California (USA)

Address: 800 block of Mad River Road, 95521

Type: Dust Explosion

Fuel: Grain Dust

Industry: Grain Processing (Agriculture)

Equipment: Hay Pile

Company: Unknown

Database Incidents: None Recorded

Loss: No Injuries

Capital Cost: Unknown

Status: Open

Confirmation: Unconfirmed

Company Description:

The farm and its owner were not identified in any press coverage of the incident.

Incident Description:

On August 24, 2020, [Redheaded Blackbelt](#) reported a dust explosion inside a barn in Arcata, California.

Firefighters arrived to find a 14,400 square foot barn ablaze, with smoke issuing through the eaves. As they deployed hose lines and set up a water supply, the hay pile suddenly collapsed, creating a huge fireball.

The Battalion Chief later stated, "Thankfully our firefighters had not gone inside yet. When the hay pile collapsed, it caused a dust explosion. All of the hay dust and particles ignited simultaneously. This fire went from light smoke to a flashover in about thirty seconds."

Firefighters used approximately 30,000 gallons of water trying to extinguish the flames but were unsuccessful, so they discontinued efforts and let the hay burn. Firefighters said that the fire would continue to burn for approximately one week, and advised those impacted by the smoke to keep their doors and windows closed.

No injuries were reported. The barn and its contents (approximately 187 tons of hay) were lost.

<https://dustsafetyscience.com/dust-explosion-arcata-california/>