

What causes dust in the logistics industry



4 dust sources you need to monitor

Dust is tricky to contain. It originates from a number of sources, is easily distributed in the air, and settles on any available surface.

The problem with allowing dust to build up in the workplace is that it puts your employees' health at risk, exposing them to mild breathing irritations and perhaps even to severe issues like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). High dust levels also increase general cleaning costs and necessitate more frequent equipment maintenance. These expenses are an unnecessary drain on your resources, making dust a problem that must be addressed.

The first step is figuring out what causes dust in your warehouse. Here are four dust sources you must monitor to protect your workplace.

The accumulation of dust is one of the most common issues affecting warehouses and distribution facilities. In fact, almost all logistics companies struggle with it.





+ Forklifts

When in motion, the forklift's wheels rub against the floor. This abrasive motion generates a lot of dust, which is then blown into the air by the forklift as it moves. Once the dust is airborne, the forklift engines suck it in again, similar to a cyclone vacuum cleaner.

This is a serious concern as dust in a forklift engine will contaminate the oil and cause problems with the electrical gear. This invariably results in a poor performing forklift that could even malfunction. A faulty forklift requires a lot of maintenance which results in downtime, and a significant loss of productivity.

When dust accumulates on the floor, it can make the surface slippery. This makes it harder for forklifts to brake in time, which could result in them hitting walls, shelves or even people. Of course, slippery floors also pose a danger for employees as they may fall and hurt themselves.



+ Cardboard boxes and pallets

Most companies blame their forklifts for tracking dust and dirt throughout their warehouses. However, cardboard boxes and pallets are the more likely primary sources of dust – cutting, assembling, packing and transporting cardboard boxes as well as moving wooden pallets, generates more grime than you might realise.

When a cardboard box is touched, moved or cut, pieces of it will inevitably come loose and drift into the air or fall on the ground. These tiny particles clump together to form balls of dust which are then kicked up into the air and settle on machinery or workstations.

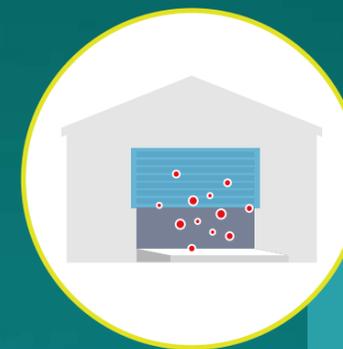


+ Goods in transit

According to the World Health Organisation, transporting goods is one of the major causes of dust often overlooked by logistics companies.

Your company may not actually produce the goods itself, but often they arrive from a supplier covered in dust. Shipping them in this condition is not the best way to build a good company reputation.

Making sure that the goods you store are kept in a clean environment and then, once transported, always arrive in a good condition is a great unique selling proposition.



+ Dock doors

Each time your workers open and close your facility's dock doors, they are letting in dust and dirt from outside. This dust and dirt will blow in and settle everywhere – on the floors, walls, machines, employees and workstations.

This is a particular problem in industrialised areas where the particle concentration in the outside air is higher than inside. Keeping this under control requires a mammoth investment in regular cleaning services.



Dealing with dust

Once you've figured out what causes dust in your warehouse, you need to consider how to deal with the problem. One of the most effective ways to re-duce dust in your warehouse is by in-stalling a clean air system like Zehnder Clean Air Solutions.

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