

Best Practices for Processing Suspect Fire Bales
At Cotton Gins and Cotton Warehouses

There is a necessity for a fire prevention policy between cotton gins and cotton warehouses to minimize the risk of fire hazards in the storing and shipping of lint. These practices should be used when detecting and handling suspect fire bales: where a visible flame was present in the gin, a detection device alerted a risk and was verified by gin staff, an odor of fire was present, or any other flame risk where ignition could be possible is found. These practices are recommended by the Council as a minimum standard when working with insurance companies.

Gin practices for processing suspect fire bales:

- Gin should isolate suspect fire bales from other bales by placing the suspect fire bales in a monitoring location as selected by gin management.
- Gin should isolate a minimum of **two additional** bales before and after the suspect fire bale for a total of five bales including the suspect fire bale, or more bales as determined by gin management.
- Gin should notify warehouse management of any prior cotton loads delivered or in transit associated with the suspect fire bales as determined by gin management.
- Gin should retain suspect fire bales and additional bales for a minimum of **five** days from the date of suspected detection at the gin premise or longer as determined by gin management.

Gin practices for the delivery of suspect fire bales after the monitoring period:

- Gin should clearly mark the bales as suspect fire bales with approved marking materials as provided by the warehouse. Suspected fire bales should be clearly marked with adhesive tags or tape on both sides of each bale. No markings may be added to the exterior of the bale that cannot be removed without risk of damage to the bagging material.
- Gin should identify suspect bales on the appropriate reporting to the warehouse staff.
- Gin agrees that delivery of suspect fire bales is limited to daytime shifts of warehouse operation hours.
- Gin staff should load suspect fire bales to the back of the truck when shipping to aid warehouse staff in identifying suspected fire bales in a mixed load.

Warehouse practices for processing suspect fire bales:

- Warehouse staff should isolate the suspect fire bales on arrival at a designated area.
- Warehouse staff should receive, record the location, and issue warehouse receipts at the warehouse's discretion for the suspected fire bales.
- Warehouse staff should conduct **daily** monitoring of the suspect fire bales and return the bales to inventory after a monitoring period is completed as determined by warehouse management.
- Warehouse staff should remove markings or adhesive tags designating suspect fire bales after monitoring period is complete.

Gin and Warehouse should each agree to practice and implement these procedures for suspect fire bales and notify each other of any alterations or deviations to agreed-upon practices regarding suspect fire bales, prior to implementing any new practices.