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**Solid biofuels — Safe handling  
and storage of solid biofuel pellets  
in commercial and industrial  
applications**

*Biocombustibles solides — Manutention et stockage en toute sécurité  
des granulés de biocombustibles solides dans des applications  
commerciales et industrielles*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 238, *Solid biofuels*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

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## Introduction

There is a continuous global growth in production, storage, handling, bulk transport and use of solid biofuels especially in the form of pelletized biofuels.

The handling and storage of solid biofuels and their physical characteristics can lead to a risk for fire and/or explosion, but also health risks, for example intoxication due to exposure to carbon monoxide (CO), asphyxiation due to oxygen depletion, and allergic reactions.

There is a risk of injury or fatality associated with pellet storage so the implementation of safety measures is important. The possibility of fire and explosion incidents is a clear indicator that safety is to be prioritized, first of all for human safety but also because interruptions in energy supply will have significant consequences. The market confidence in solid biofuels as a reliable energy source will be jeopardized, and financial losses due to business interruptions could occur. Difficulty to obtain insurance coverage will also increase.

This document provides support, advice and guidance to facility owners, logistics providers, equipment suppliers/manufacturers, consultants, authorities and insurance providers to assess and mitigate risk when handling and storing solid biofuel pellets. General guidance is provided for personnel safety protection and personal precautions in accordance with generally accepted work safety requirements. As part of the determination and assessment of risks for solid biofuels, applicable quality standards and related test methods are discussed and recommendations for additional methodologies are indicated. As made of living materials, solid biofuels are subject to degradation such as ageing and moisture contamination causing variability in reactivity which requires margins in risks assessments. One shipment of solid biofuels may have substantially different physical and chemical characteristics in terms of self-heating and off-gassing than another, and therefore diligent monitoring, frequent testing and house-keeping are recommended.

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# Solid biofuels — Safe handling and storage of solid biofuel pellets in commercial and industrial applications

## 1 Scope

This document provides principles and requirements for safe handling and storage of solid biofuels pellets in commercial and industrial applications. This document is using a risk-based approach to determine what safety measures should be considered.

Facilities with a storage capacity <100 t are covered by ISO 20023. Generally, for end-user facilities with a storage capacity of <1 000 t, ISO 20023 could also be applicable if storage principle and facility complexity is in-line with the objectives of ISO 20023.

This document covers the handling and storage process of pellets in the following applications:

- at a pellet production plant from the outlet of the cooler unit until loaded for transportation;
- at a commercial distributor from the receiving station until loaded for transportation; and
- at an industrial end-user from the receiving station until fed into the fuel preparation or combustion process.

Although unloading and loading of e.g. vessels, trains or trucks are included in the operational envelopes defined above, the safety aspect of the transportation itself is beyond the scope of this document.

This document also gives specific guidance on detection and suppression systems and preparatory measures to enable safe and efficient firefighting operations. Guidance on the management of fire and explosion incidents is also specified.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 12100, *Safety of machinery — General principles for design — Risk assessment and risk reduction*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1 General terms

#### 3.1.1

##### **biofuel pellet**

biofuel made with or without additives in the form of cubiform, polyhedral, polyhydric or cylindrical units with a diameter up to 25 mm, produced by compressing biomass

Note 1 to entry: Usually the biomass has been milled before densification.