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Fire safety and wind turbines

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The E-Fireball works on types A, B, and C fires, activating when exposed to flames. The extinguisher weighs 2.86 pounds, and its polystyrene shell contains a dry chemical that is both non-toxic and eco-friendly.

Robin Coles photo.

Turbine fires are rare. However, when they happen offshore, they are difficult to access and hard to repair.

Lighting strikes are the highest probability for ignitions. The financial impact of offshore wind turbine fires is more significant than onshore incidents, and fire safety was one topic at the US Offshore Wind conference held in Boston, July 11-12.

One turbine nacelle has an incredible amount of valuable assets inside and there are a lot of combustible materials. On top of the potential for material losses from a fire, there will be downtime, negative publicity, and potentially repercussions from government and nearby communities.

Wind turbine fires are dramatic and visible from far away. Video and imagery from onshore turbine fires are widely used in media campaigns by anti-wind power groups.

According to Chuck Thompson, director customer relations market safety & compliance of Elide Fire US, preplanning and recognition of that hazard can mitigate and prevent fires.

The budget process for operations and maintenance should include this preplanning, according to Thompson.

"It's not about who's in charge," he said. "It's about identifying the areas of risk for ignition points and realizing that nothing is fireproof."

One product wind operators can look at is Elide Fire's E-Fireball as an additional line of defense.

The extingisher works on types A, B, and C fires. It can be mounted in a machinery space, or launched by hand into an active fire.

The 2.86-lb. E-Fireball ball only activates when exposed to a flame. Once activated, it gives a loud bang. It has a polystyrene shell and contains dry chemical that is both non-toxic and eco-friendly.



Chuck Thompson, director of customer relations, market safety & compliance with Elide Fire US, describes the company's E-Fireball extinguisher at the US Offshore Wind 2023 conference in Boston, Mass., in July 2023. Robin Coles photo.

Offshore Wind