

An article titled “OSHA cites Scotia mill for fireball incident, \$68,560 in penalties” by Sage Alexander was printed in the Eureka Times Standard on October 6, 2025.

Humboldt Sawmill Company found a number of comments that would benefit from additional correction, clarification or commentary which are presented on the right side of the page in green italics.

Substantial factual information on Humboldt Sawmill Company and its practices are available at www.mendoco.com. Wherever possible we have provided direct links to specific material on our website to help the readers have easy access. The following comparison provides factual clarifications to statements published in the Eureka *Times-Standard* article of October 6, 2025.”

<p style="text-align: center;">Text of Article</p> <p><i>Text of article begins below, spaces placed to allow facts to line up with text of article.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Humboldt Sawmill Company Facts, Corrections, Clarifications, and Commentary</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">[BEGINNING OF ARTICLE]</p> <p><i>Last month, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited the Humboldt Sawmill Company for five violations surrounding a “fireball” accident in Scotia earlier this year, with proposed penalties totaling \$68,560.</i></p> <p><i>On March 31, a man was engulfed in flames at the mill while cleaning a piece of equipment. He subsequently leapt from a catwalk. The then 43-year-old employee suffered first and second degree burns to his face and limbs, plus injuries as a result of the fall. He was transported to a local emergency room.</i></p> <p><i>Rio Dell Fire Protection District Fire Chief Shane Wilson told the Times-Standard the equipment was a concern for the department as it required personnel to unplug a system that can produce flames, and noted employees have previously had their clothes melted when cleaning the system.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">[ARTICLE CONTINUES BELOW]</p>	<p>The incident occurred at HSC’s combined heat and power plant (CoGen). The worker involved in this incident was an independent contractor performing work at the facility</p> <p>Incident occurred during non-routine work wherein equipment was offline in preparation for commencing work by outside contractors to replace an air filtration system and corresponding handling system.</p> <p>Post incident HSC personnel met with Rio Dell Fire Protection District Leadership personnel to provide additional details pertaining to the incident; information that the Fire Chief did not have at time of incident.</p> <p>During this meeting HSC personnel also provided Fire District personnel with a tour of the CoGen to</p>

<p>According to the Sept. 3 inspection detail, recently released on the OSHA website, the agency cited the company for violations of five California workplace safety regulations — including a provision regarding “machines and equipment in which the hazard of dust explosion exists,” to avoid harming employees. This and a citation surrounding a lack of personal protective equipment are for \$22,500 each.</p> <p>Other citations include lack of training for work hazards and a citation for emergency action plans. Four of the penalties are listed as “serious” but none are willful or repeated. Each of the citations in the inspection detail are described as corrected during inspection. Cal/OSHA began investigating the incident that week.</p> <p>The Humboldt Sawmill Company in Scotia declined to comment via an operator.</p> <p>[END OF ARTICLE]</p>	<p>explain the process, equipment, and corresponding hazards as well as reviewed proper ingress and egress routes and nomenclature throughout the plant. Previously HSC had toured public safety officials for the purpose of understanding the physical layout of the facility in the event of an emergency. This practice will continue.</p> <p>HSC has been unable to ascertain or find any information related to any incident to clothes being damaged or melted. During HSC’s meeting with Fire District Leadership, HSC was unable to get any details supporting the allegation that there had been prior incidents involving melted clothing.</p> <p>All citations associated with the incident are currently under appeal.</p> <p>HSC remains committed to continuous improvement and transparent communication with Cal/OSHA and the community. Anyone interested in touring the facility should contact the company via www.mendoco.com.</p>
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