

Shoalhaven residents shaken by another factory explosion

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FULL TEXT

Another explosion has rocked a Bomaderry factory, at least the third in six months.

Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters were called to Manildra's Shoalhaven Starches facility on Bolong Road at 10.22am on Thursday, December 21 after a gluten dryer caught fire.

But the sprinkler fire protection system kicked in and extinguished the blaze.

No one was injured, and firefighters were finished at the scene by 11.20am.

But the incident was felt by nearby residents, who took to social media to share news of the blast and ask what the "big bang" was.

Fires within the same gluten dryer were the cause of two prior explosions at the facility: one in November, and another in July.

In a statement, the Manildra Group said it had implemented all steps recommended by the dryer manufacturers after these incidents.

"This included infrastructure and modifications to the site to mitigate any future risks, and these systems all performed accordingly," the statement said.

"Establishing the cause of the incident and implementing all safety recommendations is our highest priority."

The company thanked emergency services and onsite teams for their response, saying emergency protocols and safety measures were employed immediately.

"When the incident occurred, three specialist engineers from the dryer manufacturer were on site," it said.

Manildra said its primary concern was "always for the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees and the local community" and it was committed to maintaining the highest workplace health and safety standards.

SafeWork NSW has been contacted for further information.

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DETAILS

Subject:	Fires
Identifier / keyword:	Accident; Emergency services; Traffic accident
Publication title:	Illawarra Mercury; Wollongong, N.S.W.
First page:	0
Publication year:	2023
Publication date:	Dec 22, 2023
Publisher:	Rural Press Pty Ltd Australian Community Media (ACM)

Place of publication:	Wollongong, N.S.W.
Country of publication:	Australia
Publication subject:	General Interest Periodicals--Australia
ISSN:	1443900X
Source type:	Newspaper
Language of publication:	English
Document type:	News
ProQuest document ID:	2904276657
Document URL:	http://ezproxy.sl.nsw.gov.au/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/anznews/newspapers/s-hoalhaven-residents-shaken-another-factory/docview/2904276657/sem-2?accountid=13902
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Last updated:	2023-12-21
Database:	Australia & New Zealand Newsstream

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