



Fire Safety Pointers for Farmers Processing Hemp

Electrical Safety, Solvent Safety, and Building Safety are *All* Essential for Fire Safety

Electrical Safety

- Do not overload electrical sockets, breakers, or circuits.
- Avoid putting cords against walls or across doorways.
- Do not run cords under or over furniture or coverings which can overheat and cause fire.
- Follow installation guidance for equipment as jerry-rigging creates risks.
- Use power strips equipped with overload protection.
- Check that all power strips and extension cords are tested and certified by a laboratory to national recognized standards, such as [UL](#) (*Underwriters Laboratories*).

Note: Drying equipment greatly increases an electricity load with unintended consequences. Listings are highly specified to each piece of equipment being tested. Equipment may be listed individually but plugged in together may create overloading of circuitry with wires shorting out.

Solvent Safety

- Use proper storage and handling of flammable liquids and explosive gases in the extraction process.
- Solvent products need to be stored in separate places from processing.
- Motors can become sources of ignition to ethanol vapor so must be located away from solvents.
- Make sure buildings are adequately ventilated.
- Use appropriate signage.
- Follow regulations as to amounts of flammable and hazardous materials which can be stored.
- DIY products can add risk.
- Dispose of waste products appropriately.
- Notify your local fire department if using hazardous products, to avoid unintended exposure.

Note: Solvents used in extraction such as butane and ethanol are flammable because they have low ignition temperatures. Solvent extraction can destroy plant waxes and terpenes. Solvent extraction may produce oil which contains chlorophyll or other harmful contaminants.

General Building Safety

- Install smoke detection systems.
- Install fire sprinkler systems.
- Maintain smoke suppression systems.
- Use flame-retardant materials. *Plastic coverings are flammable and can create dangerous smoke and heat.*
- Make your working areas are accessible to firefighters.
- Keep the building plans handy.
- Outline clear pathways to all exit doors.

Note: Any farm or facility which performs extraction operations with flammable or compressed gases is considered a public building for meeting fire safety codes regardless of the number of employees.

See UVM Extension's YouTube video of webinar recording [Fire Safety on Farm](#)

More information: www.firesafety.vermont.gov and [Vermont Fire & Building Safety Codes](#)

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