

Hopper Car Unloading Checklist for Customers

(Guidelines for Unloading Polyethylene)

STEP 1: Inbound - Safety & Security Procedures

- ☐ **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** – Always follow your company safety procedures.
- ☐ **Safety** – Ensure derail, blue caution flag/sign and wheel chocks in place, and handbrake set.
- ☐ **Security Inspection** – No signs of tampering (e.g., broken/alterd security seal), no visible pest contamination, suspicious items, vandalism, or other security concerns.
- ☐ **Hopper Car Damage Inspection** – No obvious signs of damage, inoperable, or missing parts.

STEP 2: Setup – Preparing Hopper Car for Unloading

- ☐ If hopper car has **vented hatches**, ensure vents are clear of snow and ice. **If no vented hatches:** Cut off top hatch seal, open hatch cover, install hatch filter (*only if safe to access top of hopper car*).
- ☐ **Cut off seals to draft tube end caps** on compartments to be unloaded.
- ☐ **Unlock and remove caps from both ends of draft tube** (both sides of car).
- ☐ **Purge/remove** any pellets or granular powder, and contamination inside the draft tube.
- ☐ **Install inlet draft tube filter** on air intake side.
- ☐ **Connect offloading hose** to discharge side of draft tube.
- ☐ **Connect bonding and grounding cables** to hopper car, unloading hose/equipment, and grounding source.
- ☐ **Place pellet spill containment tray** under offloading hose and draft tube connection.

STEP 3: Starting Unloading Operations

- ☐ **Turn on conveying system.**
- ☐ **Open draft tube unloading valve** in small increments to prevent large fluctuations of air pressure. Always follow your company operating procedures.

STEP 4: Completing Unloading Operations

- ☐ **Use a rubber mallet** or plastic dead blow hammer to **tap the outer side wall** of the compartment to dislodge any pellets or granular powder that may be stuck/hung up.
- ☐ If safe to access top hatch, **visually check** the compartment to verify it is **empty** (< 500 kg/1100 lbs.) – If needed, use a non-metallic tipped rod/probe/pole through the hatch opening to move the resins into the draft tube. Reasonable care must be taken not to hit or damage the lining.
- ☐ **Turn off conveying system.**
- ☐ If applicable, **remove hatch filter**, and **close hatch**.
- ☐ **Close unloading valve**, disconnect offloading hose, and remove air intake filters. Always follow your company operating procedures.
- ☐ **Clean/purge the draft tube** of any pellets or granular powder.
- ☐ **Reinstall draft tube end caps, locking arm, install pin, and apply security seal.**
- ☐ **Clean up any spilled pellets or granular powder** released during unloading operations.

STEP 5: Post-Unload / Pre-Trip Inspection

- ☐ **Safety** – Unloading tools, equipment, and accessories removed from hopper car and rail track. Always follow your company operating procedures.
- ☐ **Security Inspection** – All valves and hatches closed, locked, and sealed. No visible pest contamination, suspicious items, or other security concerns.
- ☐ **Environment** – Spilled pellets or granular powder cleaned up from floor/ground and hopper car.
- ☐ **Hopper Car Damage Inspection** – No obvious signs of damage, inoperable, or missing parts.



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