



Training

3 Safety Training Courses for Becoming a Certified Safety Professional

Adam Shalvey | Mar 01, 2017

What You Need to Know

There are no standard certifications for safety instructors.

Here's a crash course on the most important safety training and certifications.

Either online or in-person training may be right for your company.

Get insight into what you need to stay on top of your certifications.

Outside of certain aviation-related training, the U.S. Department of Transportation “does not designate sources of training, nor certify training courses, instructors and/or schools,” says Susan A. Hand, a public affairs specialist at the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), a division of the DOT.

Companies such as **BASF**, a multinational chemicals manufacturing corporation based in Germany, focus first on hazmat training, says Michael Vogt, Americas asset optimization and supply chain manager for chemical catalysts at BASF, referring to the handling of hazardous materials.

“Everyone handling, transporting or completing paperwork involving hazardous materials must complete training with U.S. DOT-approved materials,” Vogt says. “The training is critical to the safety of themselves as well as the people around them—including emergency first responders and the general public.”

But it's not just people who directly handle hazardous materials or the emergency responders who need training, Vogt says.

“At minimum, every BASF employee goes through Responsible Care awareness training,” he says. The global initiative, which aims to improve performance and educate employees, is an example of a company making sure all employees, from the lowest level to top-tier executives, have the necessary safety knowledge and training. For smaller companies that don't have the support and resources of a global corporation like BASF, there are a number of third-party programs, schools and online resources.

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Americas Asset Optimization and Supply Chain Manager, BASF

With that in mind, here is our crash course on three of the most important training courses and certifications you should know:

1. GHS

The *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals* (GHS) is a universally recognized training initiative that, among other things, centers on educating relevant professionals and providing the necessary criteria for classifying chemicals based on health, physical and environmental hazards.

The training should be completed by people directly involved in handling, transporting, testing or manipulating hazardous chemicals. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration recently incorporated GHS into its revised *Hazard Communication Standard* (HCS), so make sure to visit the *OSHA website* for updated requirements and regulations.

2. Certified Safety Professionals

Certified Safety Professionals (CSP) is an internationally accredited training program for professionals who perform “at least 50 percent of professional-level safety duties.” These may include assessing risk and potential hazards on a worksite, managing safety training and investigating incidents.

To pursue CSP training, a candidate must have:

- A bachelor’s degree in any field or an associate degree in safety, health, the environment or another closely related field
- Four years of professional safety experience in which safety is at least 50 percent of the position’s responsibilities
- At least one credential approved by the Board of Certified Safety Professionals, such as *Associate Safety Professional* (ASP), *Graduate Safety Practitioner* (GSP) or *Certified Industrial Hygienist* (CIH)
- A passing score on the CSP examination

3. Hazmat

“Any industry with employees—or a person who is self-employed—who directly affect hazmat transportation safety should consider hazmat training and education a top priority,” says the DOT’s Hand. Hazmat training, she says, is essential for employees with any of the following responsibilities:

- Loading, unloading or handling hazardous materials
- Representing packaging as qualified for use in transporting hazardous materials (including designing, manufacturing, fabricating, inspecting, testing, reconditioning, repairing, modifying and marking packages)
- Preparing hazardous materials for transportation
- Overseeing the safety of transporting hazardous materials

- Operating a vehicle used to transport hazardous materials

Hazmat School offers a number of ***online safety courses*** developed with Safety Compliance Management and centered on hazardous waste and materials. The school has more than 7,000 students a year taking courses ranging from hazmat safety to emergency response—all of which comply with DOT, OSHA and Environmental Protection Agency regulations.

Choose the Right Safety Training for Your Company

Although choosing from, and eventually taking, the variety of training courses available can be daunting, doing so is essential for all employees of companies of all sizes. It can often mean the difference between accident and catastrophe.

“So many of the incidents reported to PHMSA are a result of human error,” Hand says. “They may have been prevented or mitigated through proper training.”

What training or certification classes have you taken?

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