



# Worker Training Program: Minnesota

*A National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Superfund-Related Activity*

The NIEHS Worker Training Program (WTP) annually funds about 1,000 health and safety courses for 20,000 workers in Minnesota. Recipients of NIEHS grants lead training to prepare workers to handle hazardous materials and respond to disasters in their communities.



### Courses include:

- Basic Superfund Site Worker and Site Worker Refresher
- Confined Space Rescue
- Disaster Site Worker Train-the-Trainer
- Emergency Response
- General Industry and General Construction Safety
- Hazard Communication
- Hazardous Waste Operations
- Lead Abatement Supervisor

## Training Highlights

### Community College Training

Every year, thousands of Minnesotans receive health and safety training through the Community College Consortium for Health and Safety Training/National Partnership for Environmental Technology Education, a WTP grantee.

Trainings are provided at Hennepin Technical College in Eden Prairie, South Central College in Faribault, and Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter. The courses address hazardous waste operations, emergency response, confined space rescue, and industry and construction safety.



### Training for Private and Public Sectors

WTP grantees provide training to large Minnesota-based companies, such as Aveda Corporation and 3M. State and municipal offices also use WTP-funded training for their employees. The training allows for the private and public sectors to not only reduce harm to their workers, but also keep the surrounding communities safe and avoid environmental damage.

In 2016, workers at the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Pipeline Safety, responded to a pipeline failure and possible release of asbestos. The University of Minnesota, a member of the Midwest Consortium for Hazardous Waste Worker Training, had trained the workers in how to effectively take action. They used restricted excavation to limit the spread of contamination and kept people safe from asbestos exposure.



### About the Worker Training Program

WTP funds nonprofit organizations to provide health and safety training for workers who may be exposed to hazardous materials and waste at work or while assisting with emergency response. WTP was initiated under the Hazardous Substance Basic Research and Training Program authorized by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (42 USC 9660a).

Under these NIEHS Superfund-related activities, WTP grantees provide trainings across the country through the [Hazardous Waste, Hazmat Disaster, and Environmental Career Worker Training Programs](#).

**For more information, visit [www.niehs.nih.gov/wtp](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/wtp).**

### Fuel Transport Emergency Preparedness Training

Grantee OAI, Inc. is training workers on emergency response to potential train derailments and releases involving crude oil transported across Minnesota from the Bakken oil fields. Railroad and pipeline companies help fund the expansion of this emergency preparedness training, as a result of Minnesota's 2014 Railroad and Pipeline Safety legislation.

Additionally, the University of Minnesota (UMN), a member of the Midwest Consortium for Hazardous Waste Worker Training, has provided 40-hour and annual refresher emergency response training to energy company workers along the Minnesota transport route.

Acknowledging that community members are the first affected in disasters and often try to help, UMN also partners with Citizens Acting for Rail Safety to provide emergency response and preparedness training to urban and rural Minnesota communities, through which high-hazard freight trains pass.



Photo courtesy of The Midwest Consortium for Hazardous Waste Worker Training

### Nuclear Worker Training

The International Union of Operating Engineers National Training Fund receives funding from the [NIEHS/Department of Energy \(DOE\) Nuclear Worker Training Program](#) to train workers for jobs at DOE sites. Courses include confined space and crane rigging, 40-hour site worker training, site worker refresher training, and Occupational Safety and Health Administration 10-hour and 30-hour courses on workplace hazards and worker rights.

The courses are taught in Hinckley and White Bear Lake, in support of the remediation of nuclear waste at Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois.

### Job Training and Economic Impact

The NIEHS WTP Environmental Career Worker Training Program (ECWTP) provides job training for disadvantaged and underrepresented workers. ECWTP is implemented in St. Paul, Minnesota through grantee CPWR — The Center for Construction Research and Training.

CPWR, in collaboration with the St. Paul College Trading Up program, the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council, and state and local partner organizations, provides environmental hazard, life skills, and construction training, as well as mentoring and career guidance.

Through this unique partnership, the community members develop marketable skills and receive assistance with job placement. Prior trainees are now making an average of \$13.50 an hour in their jobs.

Nationwide, the ECWTP has an **economic impact**, through delivery of pre-employment and health and safety training in underserved communities.



Photo courtesy of CPWR

### Overall Training

In recent years, the following [NIEHS WTP grantees](#) trained workers in Minnesota:

- Community College Consortium for Health and Safety Training/National Partnership for Environmental Technology Education
- CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training
- International Association of Fire Fighters
- International Chemical Workers Union Council Center for Worker Health and Safety Education
- International Union of Operating Engineers National Training Fund
- LIUNA (Laborers' International Union of North America) Training and Education Fund
- Midwest Consortium for Hazardous Waste Worker Training
- OAI, Inc.
- United Steelworkers Tony Mazzocchi Center for Health, Safety, and Environmental Education