



# Worker Training Program: California

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

The NIEHS Worker Training Program (WTP) annually funds training for more than 11,000 workers through about 800 health and safety courses in California. Recipients of NIEHS grants lead training to prepare workers to handle hazardous materials and respond to disasters in their communities.



### Courses include:

- Asbestos Abatement
- Basic Superfund Site Worker and Site Worker Refresher
- Emergency Response
- General Construction Safety
- Oil Spill Response
- Respiratory Protection

## Training Highlights

### Hazardous Waste Cleanup

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control partners with the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) to train community residents for jobs in lead soil sampling and cleanup, with a focus on properties contaminated by the former Exide Technologies lead battery recycling plant. The UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program (UCLA-LOSH), part of the Western Region Universities Consortium (WRUC), provides the training.

The LIUNA (Laborers' International Union of North America) Training and Education Fund annually trains approximately 1,300 workers for jobs in demolition, construction, and energy, where they may encounter unknown contaminants, hazardous waste, lead, asbestos, and mold. Workers use their training to prepare for cleanup and recovery work. The trainings take place at the LIUNA training center in Azusa, California.



Photo courtesy of WRUC

### Job Training and Economic Impact

The Environmental Career Worker Training Program (ECWTP) offers job training for disadvantaged and underrepresented workers. UCLA-LOSH partners with state and local organizations in the Los Angeles area to provide environmental hazard, life skills, and construction skills training, as well as mentoring and career guidance to participants.

In program year 2016-2017, UCLA-LOSH trained 40 students in California, with 80 percent obtaining employment. Most of the trainees are now employed full time in lead soil sampling and assessment at the Exide cleanup project. ECWTP has a nationwide **economic impact** through delivery of pre-employment and health and safety training in underserved communities.



Photo courtesy of LIUNA

### 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).**

## Nuclear Worker Training

CPWR - The Center for Construction Research and Training prepares workers for jobs at U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear weapons sites and nuclear waste sites, with funding from the [NIEHS/DOE Nuclear Worker Training Program](#). In California, CPWR provides courses to DOE workers on general construction safety, confined space rescue, and asbestos abatement.

NIEHS/DOE grantees conduct courses for workers at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Santa Susana Field Laboratory, and SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory. They provide safety and health training for cleanup activities, waste management, and hazardous materials response.

## Biosafety, Biosecurity, and Infectious Disease Response Training

WTP also provides training under the [Ebola Biosafety and Infectious Disease Response Training Program](#), a national effort to deliver infection control practices and hazard recognition training to workers in health care and non-health care settings. In the first year of the program, grantees taught more than 200 workers through 14 courses in California.



Photo courtesy of ICWUC

In Oakland, trainers at the Cypress Mandela Training Center taught five infectious disease awareness courses to 85 students, as part of the center's construction industry pre-apprenticeship program. The courses were supported through a partnership with the International Chemical Workers Union Council (ICWUC) Center for Worker Health and Safety Education, and Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

NIEHS received \$10 million, from emergency Ebola treatment and prevention funds provided by Congress to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to develop this three-year program.

## Emergency Preparedness and Response Training

NIEHS grantees have developed important training initiatives for emergency response and preparedness. After the 2017 wildfires and mudslides in California, grantees began delivering critical hazardous waste training to construction workers, day laborers, and volunteers tasked with cleaning up hazardous ash and debris. The trainings

are provided through the International Union of Operating Engineers National Training Fund, part of the consortia funded under CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training, and WRUC.

After several high-profile refinery accidents in California, the University of California, Berkeley Labor Occupational Health Program, part of WRUC, is providing emergency preparedness training, in English and Spanish, to residents living near refineries in Richmond. Also, UCLA-LOSH is training refinery workers in Southern California on regulatory updates supporting refinery safety and emergency preparedness.



Photo courtesy of WRUC

## Overall Training

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

- Community College Consortium for Health and Safety Training/National Partnership for Environmental Technology Education
- CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training
- Indiana University Bloomington
- International Association of Fire Fighters
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters
- 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
- OAI, Inc.
- Service Employees International Union Education and Support Fund
- United Steelworkers Tony Mazzocchi Center for Health, Safety, and Environmental Education
- Texas-Utah Consortium for Hazardous Waste Worker Education and Training
- Western Region Universities Consortium