



Worker Training Program: Connecticut

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

The NIEHS Worker Training Program (WTP) annually funds training for nearly 3,000 workers through 200 health and safety courses in Connecticut. These grantee-led trainings 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
- Confined Space Entry and Rescue
- Emergency Response
- General Construction and General Industry Safety
- Hazard Communication
- Hazardous Waste Operations
- Infectious Control Risk Assessment

Training Highlights

Statewide Vocational Health and Safety Training

The American Federation of Teachers, funded through the International Chemical Workers Union Council Center for Worker Health and Safety Education, works with the Connecticut State Department of Education to train vocational teachers to become OSHA safety class trainers. Many employers require students to possess an OSHA 10-hour construction industry or general industry safety class completion card prior to employment so workers can recognize, prevent, and avoid health and safety hazards in the workplace.

The program currently trains Connecticut teachers who operate across technical high schools, aviation maintenance programs, and a technical education center, serving approximately 11,000 high school students of diverse backgrounds. To date, this program has trained more than 100 technical educators as OSHA-authorized instructors, allowing 6,000 vocational students to earn OSHA certification cards. Many of these young workers gain employment in the construction or manufacturing fields. This partnership has also led to a program that trains Connecticut educators to deliver an eight-hour first aid, CPR, and AED course to more than 3,000 high school students annually.

Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response

WTP also prepares workers for infectious disease hazards, delivering training for health care and non-health care settings. Courses such as infection control risk assessment for construction workers and infectious disease awareness have been taught in Connecticut. During the COVID-19 pandemic, in May 2020, the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) trained more than 50 of its members at Foxwoods Resort Casino. Members were trained in safety and sanitization protocols to protect themselves and further ensure guest and team member safety.



Photo courtesy of UAW



Photo Courtesy of ICWUC

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.

Preparing Workers for Hazardous Waste Cleanup

Headquartered in Pomfret Center, the LIUNA (Laborers' International Union of North America) Training and Education Fund is a leader in workforce development providing training and education to meet the needs of trainers, apprentices, journey-workers, supervisors, government personnel, and law enforcement.



Photo courtesy of LIUNA

LIUNA's construction craft laborer career and technical high school program, U.S. Department of Labor-recognized apprenticeships, and career-long skills enhancement options allow workers to seek specialized training in fields such as renewable energy, infrastructure, construction, and environmental remediation. In Connecticut, LIUNA annually trains approximately 500 workers with the goal of protecting those who may be exposed to unknown contaminants, infectious diseases, hazardous waste, radiation, asbestos, and mold on the job. Innovative recruitment strategies remain key to attracting racial minorities, women, and ex-military personnel into LIUNA.

Disaster and Hazard Safety for the Construction Sector

Multiple NIEHS grantees have developed important training initiatives for emergency response and preparedness. For example, CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training delivers courses for approximately 15 employers annually across Connecticut. These include disaster site worker and train-the-trainer courses, preparing the workforce in advance for disasters such as Nor'easters.

In addition, as part of CPWR's training consortium, the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT) and the International Union of Operating Engineers deliver numerous courses on topics such as lead abatement and general construction safety. IUPAT supports Connecticut employers, such as Blast All Inc., as well as national employers with a Connecticut presence, like Atsalis Brothers Painting, by providing state-required training on lead-safe work practices. The training protects the public and workers from lead-based paint hazards during bridge rehabilitation and maintenance work.

Leveraging Efforts of Worker Health and Safety Groups

The New England Consortium-Civil Service Employees Association, funded through the University of Massachusetts Lowell, works with several New England

Council on Occupational Safety and Health (COSH) groups, including ConnectiCOSH. These COSH groups are dedicated to protecting workers from occupational injury, illness, and fatality through support to labor unions and other groups of workers. ConnectiCOSH provides health and safety training to more than 200 workers in OSHA rights and other safety topics annually, most of whom are immigrants, teens, and participants in job training programs like the Hartford Jobs Corps Academy, Urban League of Greater Hartford, Capital Workforce Partners, STRIVE, and YouthBuild. These individuals are more prepared to respond to day-to-day and unexpected hazards.

Partnership for Environmental Technology Education

Every year, more than 600 workers gain critical job skills through health and safety training at Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic. Courses include general industry safety, confined space entry and exit, hazardous materials transportation, and Superfund site worker safety. The training is sponsored by the Community College Consortium for Health and Safety Training/National Partnership for Environmental Technology Education.



Photo courtesy of Eastern Connecticut State University

Overall Training

The following [WTP grantees](#) trained workers in Connecticut:

- Alabama Fire College Workplace Safety Training
- 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 Brotherhood of Teamsters
- International Chemical Workers Union Council Center for Worker Health and Safety Education
- International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
- LIUNA (Laborers' International Union of North America) Training and Education Fund
- Nova Southeastern University
- The New England Consortium-Civil Service Employees Association
- United Steelworkers Tony Mazzocchi Center for Health, Safety, and Environmental Education