

Sources of Safety Training and Training Materials

As a safety trainer or safety facilitator (probably a better title for what I do) it is often a challenge to come up with new and interesting material. The people I arrange training for are tired of watching dry Right-to-Know videos. Besides training that is interesting, it is also important to provide training that is pertinent to weights and measures officials. Due to the unique and diverse nature of our work this is often not easy to do. Following are three sources that I have had significant success with.

Staff within your own department:

One of our staff is a volunteer fire fighter and provides training on fire extinguishers. We had done this training ourselves in the past but always in the classroom with a computer projector. At one of our schools we asked this staff member to bring a dozen or so filled fire extinguishers. Although almost all of our attendees had received training on fire extinguishers in the past many had never actually used one. We were able to set some small controlled fires outside

the building under the supervision of a fire fighter and have everyone put out a real fire.

U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) (www.csb.gov):

This website has some of the best safety videos I have ever seen and they are downloadable free of charge. One of the things that make these videos so good is how they use detailed animations to explain hazardous situations. If you visit the site I highly recommend "Half an Hour to Tragedy" which describes a propane explosion at a gas station convenience store. All of our Specialists have seen this video and overwhelmingly they have told me it is one of the most poignant ones I have shown. You can also fill out a short request form and they will send you a free DVD with all their videos. Hint if you are playing the video from your laptop: Bring a set of computer speakers to obtain better sound.

Other Agencies within your State:

At our last school I asked a Department

of Environmental Conservation (DEC) officer to present a class on spill response. He went over various types of spills and when weights and measures should call in DEC. He showed pictures of leaking retail motor fuel dispensers and fill ports filled with gasoline/water mixtures. These were the types of things that officials could relate to and the class was a great success.

Weights and measures officials face a wide variety of safety hazards including hazardous materials, static electricity, heavy equipment, confined spaces, tall ladders, etc. The best way to keep safety at the forefront of official's minds is for someone to keep pushing the safety message through safety training. So good luck to all you safety trainers and keep the message going!

— Mike Sikula
New York Bureau of Weights and Measures