

Refresher training or competency retesting requirements vary for each of the response levels. In general, refresher training should include critical skills practice, technical information updates, and refinement of incident scene coordination through field exercises simulating emergencies. At a minimum, competency should be demonstrated in all refresher training for the skills directly affecting the safety of responding personnel. Minimum hours for annual refresher training for response personnel are not specified in OSHA 1910.120(q). However, in practice, many jurisdictions use the 8-hour minimum refresher training requirement for site workers in OSHA 1910.120(e) as a guide.

In each of the competency sections of the Response Guidelines, unique areas of emphasis for refresher training are noted.

Recommended Instructor Qualifications

OSHA 1910.120(q)(7) states: “Trainers who teach any of the above training subjects shall have satisfactorily completed a training course for teaching the subjects they are expected to teach, such as the courses offered by the U.S. National Fire Academy, or they shall have the training and/or academic credentials and instructional experience necessary to demonstrate competent instructional skills and a good command of the subject matter of the courses they are to teach.”

To implement the OSHA regulations and to encourage quality instruction, it is recommended that instructors possess the following:

- Job knowledge-thorough knowledge of the content to be taught; knowledge of how the information, techniques, and principles apply to performing the job; understanding the difficulties and problems that arise on the job; and specific training or education in the subject matter being taught
- Job Experience-actual work experience directly related to the subject matter (have performed that job being taught) and experience in hazardous materials incidents
- Training knowledge-successful completion of an instructor training course that covers the principles of learning, methods and sequencing of instruction, methods of testing and evaluation, preparing performance objectives and lesson plans, training liability (Reference: NFPA 1041), and oral and written communication skills
- Personal qualities-patience and understanding, enjoyment of and respect for students, and flexibility
- Sensitivity to cultural diversity among students

Some States and private organizations certify hazardous materials instructors. Professional organizations, such as NFPA, have established professional standards for instructors (NFPA 1041) that can be used to evaluate instructor training and certification. Employers and trainers should carefully examine the following criteria for certification of hazardous materials instructors.

- What standards have been applied?
- Are potential certified instructors tested in their area of subject matter expertise?
- Are candidates required to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in the classroom setting?
- Are there follow-up evaluations or rectification requirements?
- Are both instructional and technical skills addressed by certification?
- Is hands-on experience in hazardous materials response considered?
- Have the instructors performed the tasks being taught?

Response Training Issues
Awareness
Operations
Technician
Incident Commander
HM Branch Officer
HM Safety Officer
OSHA Specialist NFPA SpEmp A & Tech Spec
OSHA SpSpecEmpl NFPA SpEmp B,C
EMS Level 1
EMS Level 2
Hospital Personnel
Special Topics
Related Standards