



John Horner
P3 Propane Safety

How Safe Are Your Employees at the Jobsite?

A critical look at initial and recurrent safety training procedures

Have you ever wondered how safe your employees are when they're out on a jobsite? Even the best-trained employees may not retain all safety information they've been given, and the opportunity for mistakes is magnified when a company is less diligent about initial and ongoing safety training requirements.

Common safety-related oversights are usually driven by one of two things:

1. A lack of employee training, or
2. A lackadaisical approach to company policy adherence.

No matter what the reason is, however, the onus will be on the business if a catastrophic incident were to occur. That's right—it's the responsibility of the propane company to ensure employees are up to standard for all training requirements. It's imperative that a manager or owner ensure that their employees know the company's safety program and policies inside and out, increasing operational safety and reducing risk for customers, employees and the company alike.

How Many Days Should Be Reserved for Training?

Though there's not a definitive answer for the number of days that should be set aside for training new and existing employees, every company should have an ongoing training program with designated days each year to contribute toward its market's pool of qualified candidates interested in expanding their knowledge and growing their careers.

This habit will both increase the regulatory, bodily and financial safety protocol at your company, but also help employees realize you are invested in them and their success. A recent study found that 94% of employees would stay at their job if their employer invested in their long-term learning.¹

Successful companies are investing in propane-related safety training, and many have committed to training programs year after year. Once you develop a streamlined rhythm with training, initial and recurrent training become a breeze that you can easily mark off your checklist.

Once you develop a streamlined rhythm with training, initial and recurrent training become a breeze that you can easily mark off your checklist.

Which Trainings to Schedule for 2024

Required Training:

- **Certified Employee Training Program (CETP)**
 - Required for licensing in certain states
- **Hazardous Materials Handling (HAZMAT)**
 - Required by the Dept. of Transportation
- **Job-Specific Training** (Cathodic Testing, Crane Training)
 - Cathodic testing is mandatory per the National Fire Protection Association
- **Miscellaneous Training**
 - Additional safety training may be required based on a company's location and services

Recommended Training:

- **Field Training**
 - Most drivers and technicians learn best by doing—not by seeing or hearing
- **Driver Ride-Along Training**
 - Audit your team's delivery routines, unsafe condition reports, service work, installations and adherence to company Policies & Procedures—all without downtime

In-Person or Remote Training?

The propane industry has many training options available, with both in-person and online (remote). Both types meet safety training requirements, but there are some pros and cons to consider, as it pertains to the longevity of the knowledge acquired during such trainings.

Remote Training tends to be more affordable, but information is often not retained as well. This could lead to compliance issues for your company if employees who learned remotely did not absorb all

of the information presented by your propane safety expert during the course.

In-Person Training is a bit more costly, but information provided is more likely to stick in the minds of your staff. Additionally, in-person training tends to be custom-tailored to the company at hand, reducing spread of unnecessary safety information and helping the important details to stand out better.

Field Training is an auxiliary aspect of in-person training. Field training happens when a trainer joins a technician or driver (or multiple) in the field and provides feedback and corrections in real time. Field teams generally comprise hands-on learners, so this method leads to an incredible return on investment.

Keep in mind that not everyone struggles with the same thing. Providing field training can be an opportunity to connect with employees on an individual level, assisting them with their areas of weakness and demonstrating your investment in their long-term learning and growth.

This will also help your company to tie up loose ends, as many employees don't understand what issues they may be having and may make errors that have been slipping by undetected by office staff.

Time to Get Training on the Calendar

Every year, the warm (field training-friendly) months seem to slip by in the blink of an eye. Get your training on the calendar now, before it's too late. This is a critical responsibility of the propane marketer, and one that we should all be handling with the utmost respect to preserve the safety of those around us, as well as the reputation of the propane industry as a whole. **ICM**

¹<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/02/27/94percent-of-employees-would-stay-at-a-company-for-this-one-reason.html>

John Horner is the Senior Director of Safety & Training at P3 Propane Safety. He has more than 13 years of industry experience providing DOT and other safety and compliance training. You can reach John at john_horner@bostonenv.com or P3Propane.com.