



TEXAS ENGINEERING EXTENSION SERVICE

Infrastructure Training & Safety Institute • OSHA Training Institute, Southwest Education Center

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Dear Outreach Trainer,

The OSHA Training Institute, Southwest Education Center would like to acknowledge your efforts in providing outreach training for workers and employers on the recognition, avoidance, abatement, and prevention of safety and health hazards in the workplace. Your efforts have helped to ensure that workers are more knowledgeable about workplace hazards and their rights. We would also like to take this opportunity to inform you of a key change to the policy for processing card requests.

OSHA began the OSHA Training Institute (OTI) Education Center Program in 1992. Since that time, the OSHA Outreach Training Program has grown exponentially, from 51,000 student trained in 1992 to 781,000 student trained in 2010. As the training numbers increased, OSHA did not have the resources required to process the increasing number of student cards. As a result, OSHA began requiring its OTI Education Centers to process trainer card requests in 2003. While this alleviated the burden for OSHA, it proved to have a significant impact on the administrative work load for the OTI Education Centers. On average, the 25 OTI Education Centers process 1,000 requests for student course completion cards per week. In the past two years, OTI Education Centers have processed over 1.3 million student course completion cards. While the number of workers trained continues to increase, so does the administrative burden for the OTI Education Centers.

In addition to the work it takes to receive, review, process, and distribute each card request in a timely manner, the OTI Education Centers are also responsible for maintaining recordkeeping, reporting, and filing systems required to service trainers and to provide the controls that OSHA deems necessary. The OTI Education Centers have developed electronic reporting systems to enable easier reporting for trainers and maintained websites to inform trainers of the changes to the program and to provide necessary assistance in their training efforts. Recently, OSHA has stipulated that all OTI Education Centers increase their program monitoring activity, including in-person training observations, to improve quality and limit fraud. This additional oversight required by OSHA has further added to the OTI Education Centers' cost of administering the program.

It has always been OSHA's position that because the OTI Education Centers receive no funding from OSHA, they have the authority to charge fees to cover the costs involved in issuing student course completion cards. Although the OTI Education Centers have long sought to avoid implementing such a fee, the costs currently associated managing the program necessitate this action. As such, beginning October 1, 2011, the OTI Education Centers will begin charging a \$5.00 processing fee for each student course completion card issued. Additional information will be forthcoming over the next few months.

Again, thank you for your participation and support as we continue toward our mutual goal of educating this nation's workers so they may go home safely each night to their families.

Dan Gray
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Texas Engineering Extension Service