

Occupational Hygiene Training Association Debuts Website to Host International Training Modules and Materials

The Occupational Hygiene Training Association (OHTA), a new organization working under the guidance of the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA), has created a website www.OHLearning.com where course materials for international occupational hygiene training modules will be posted for free, open access.

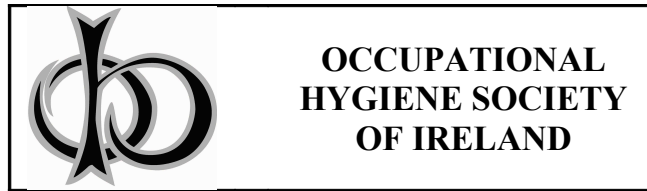
This learning portal will also provide links to participating IOHA member organizations, examining boards, and to “approved course providers.” Links will identify course locations and dates.

The new OHTA website www.OHLearning.com will open on May 1, 2010. Site feedback and updating of hosted materials will be facilitated by a “wiki” that will be accessible to all. The formation of OHTA and the launch of the website are the culmination of four years of contributions and advice of many supporters in the global occupational hygiene community.

Development of the training module scheme was initiated by a group of senior professionals from Fortune 500 companies. Preparation of the training materials was by leading academics and practitioners with support from the British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) and the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH). BP and GlaxoSmithKline funded development and piloting of the current courses. BOHS, AIOH, and the American Industrial Hygiene Association® (AIHA®) were the first signatories of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) committing organizations to support and promote development and implementation of the international training module scheme. A guiding principle of the MOU is recognition of the need to better protect workers around the world, particularly those in developing countries.

Currently, the original MOU has 11 signatories. In addition to AIHA, BOHS, and AIOH, in the last few months, many other countries have signed, including the Occupational Hygiene Society of Ireland (OHSI), South African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH), Hong Kong Institute of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene (HKIOEH), French Occupational Hygiene Society (Societe Francaise des Hygienistes du Travail (SOFHYT), Malaysian Industrial Hygiene Association (MIHA), Norwegian Occupational Hygiene Association (Norse yrkeshygienisk forening NYF), the Brazilian Occupational Hygiene Association (Associacao Brasileira de Higienistas Ocupacionais ABHO), and the Italian Occupational Hygienists Association (AIDII).

So far, seven training modules have been developed and presented as pilot courses all over the world. These are: W501 Measurement of Hazardous Substances, W502 Thermal Environment, W503 Noise, W504 Asbestos, W505 Control, W506 Ergonomics, and W507 Health Hazards of Substances. Each is a weeklong course with accompanying materials, including a student manual, PowerPoint slides, and tutor notes for all sessions; overnight student exercises; practical workshop sessions; and student assessment. An open book examination at the end of the course is part of the assessment process, which is currently available through the BOHS Faculty of Occupational Hygiene. In October 2009, the American Board of Industrial Hygiene (ABIH), the BOHS Faculty, and the Canadian Registration Board of Occupational Hygienists (CRBOH) signed their own memorandum of agreement (MOA) committing, in principle, to work together in the development of a common platform for credentialing individuals who complete all required modules and requirements at the intermediate (Level III)



technician level. These examining boards have been joined by those in Australia, South Africa, Italy, and Norway, who have each committed their organization to meeting this same objective.

Information about these open access courses, the five-level international training scheme, and the collaborative wiki are available at the new OHTA website at www.OHLearning.org. For further information, please contact the Occupational Hygiene Society of Ireland at ohsi@ireland.com.