

Fake US Safety Trainer Gets 57 Months in Jail



When it comes to safety training, you can provide it using your in-house staff or hire outside OHS consultants or trainers to provide the training for you. Either approach is acceptable under the OHS laws'provided the outside trainer is actually qualified to provide safety training.

For example, Connie Knight was sentenced on May 16, 2013 to serve 57 months' jail in a New Orleans federal court for providing fraudulent hazardous waste safety training in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon explosion and spill. The court also ordered her to pay victim restitution in the amount of \$25,300.

Knight impersonated an OSHA hazardous waste safety instructor and inspector in order to collect money from workers who hoped to work on the cleanup effort after the spill. She used fake IDs to target the Southeast Asian fishing community, many of whom didn't speak or read English. In reality, Knight didn't have any connection to OSHA or training in hazardous waste safety.

Knight claimed her classes satisfied the various safety requirements that all individuals had to complete to be employed at a Deepwater Horizon hazardous waste cleanup site. But her fraudulent classes lasted as little as two hours, while the legitimate certifications would take at least six days of classroom training followed by three daysof on-site training. And at least some attendees later gained access to hazardous waste cleanup sites based on the fraudulent certifications created by Knight.

'OSHA will not tolerate fraudulent training or unscrupulous activity when workers' health and lives may be at stake,' said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. 'Inadequate training jeopardizes the safety and health of workers cleaning up hazardous waste sites.'

So it's important that you verify the credentials and qualifications of any OHS consultants or trainers you hire to train your workers.

One tool you can use is the CSA's new training management standard. CSA Occupational Health and Safety Training Z1001'13. Among other things, Z1001 include guidance on selecting training providers with appropriate qualifications.

To learn more about CSA Z1001, watch this recorded webinar by Dylan Short, managing director of The Redlands Group Inc. and Chair of the CSA committee that developed the standard.

And for more information on safety training, go to the OHS Insider's Training Compliance Centre where you'll find, among other things:

- The training requirements for workers and supervisors under the OHS laws
- Training tools, such as checklists and a Model Safety Training Evaluation Form
- How to prove the ROI of safety training programs
- Additional recorded webinars on safety training and orientations.

You can also go to Safety Smart for tools to help you reinforce training, such as safety talks and quizzes. Not a Safety Smart member? Sign up for a free trial.