



Certificate Program at NC State Provides Safety and Environmental Know-How

Three graduates share their take-aways from the program

Employee safety and environmental management duties are sometimes combined under the auspices of an individual job description. These responsibilities are vast and intricate often containing government regulations and stiff fines for non-compliance.

The Manager of Environmental Safety and Health (MESH) Certificate Program is designed to serve those responsible for safety and environmental issues within their plant. It is an opportunity to gain practical knowledge of relevant topics as well as a valuable credential.

The program also benefits those that may not have the educational or on-the-job experience needed to handle the myriad of details required to keep employees safe while minimizing impact on the environment.

Karen Bellamy of Cascades Tissue Group began her career as a laboratory technician and worked her way up to environmental supervisor at the Rockingham, North Carolina plant. Bellamy is responsible for safety and training for the 135 employees there. Bellamy used the MESH program as a way to add to her education and increase her value at Cascades.

"More knowledge always helps," said Bellamy. "This is a good tool for small business; they should take advantage of it because it makes businesses stronger," she added. She credits the program with helping her put things together. "I now know where to go to get the information I need," said Bellamy.

"The MESH program offers exposure to the technical aspects of safety and environmental topics. MESH gave me the tools, the skill set and resources to apply it in a real world context."

Mike Furr, Nucor

The MESH certificate is awarded after successful completion of a 30-hour core curriculum and 70 elective hours. Core courses at [North Carolina State University](#) Industrial Extension Service ([IES](#)) include topics such as:

- Building Your Workplace Safety Program
- Hazardous Waste Management
- OSHA Compliance
- Back Injury Prevention

Last fiscal year, NC State assisted 76 students toward receiving their certification. They also launched an Advanced MESH program based on demand.

The electives cover similar subjects as the core curriculum but go into much greater detail. For example, a safety offering may include Accident Investigation or Workplace Violence and within Hazardous Materials you might find Dangerous Goods Transportation.

Tailor your program

Mike Furr, director of safety, health and security for Nucor in South Carolina, welcomed the options in coursework that NC State provided. "There were so many electives; it was easy to choose something that meant something to you," he said. He tailored the program to best suit Nucor's needs.

Furr, also a graduate of NC State's green belt *Six Sigma program, enjoyed applying a statistical process to safety. "We want our organization to be safe, which often goes way beyond compliance," said Furr.

Train the trainer

Bellamy's training at IES helped her in other areas as well. She took the interactive techniques learned from IES extension specialists and incorporated them into her own annual training in Rockingham, with positive results.

James Morgan, environmental, health and safety coordinator and environmental management representative for Santé Fe Natural Tobacco Co., in Oxford, North Carolina also incorporates training learned from State and employees say they're happier than when they had an outside consultant [doing the training].



James Morgan, left, of Sante Fe Tobacco listens intently as their ISO 14001 auditor makes recommendations.

Morgan said he uses some component of his MESH training every day. "This certificate strengthens my position at the company," he said. "I am contributing in a very real way," said Morgan.

To participate in a MESH program, you must submit an [on-line application](#) to IES. To become a fan of MESH, search NC State University MESH Facebook page.