

## **CETP Training and Company Procedures— A Necessary Partnership**

*By Stuart Flatow*

Since its inception, the Certified Employee Training Program (CETP) has been one of the central elements of the propane industry's program for safety.

Today, the CETP program is available not only in its traditional paper format, but also in an increasingly popular and attractive computer format. PERC's CETP E-Learning program is available in a series of computer-based DVDs that provide an excellent and efficient learning tool for new employees, as well as a useful refresher for veteran employees.

When it comes to company practices and procedures in the propane industry "one size" does *not* "fit all." That's why PERC developed the Safety & Training Administrative Record System (STARS) program, created specifically for CETP E-Learning. In essence, STARS is a bridge that links CETP lessons to related company policies, creating an essential partnership that reinforces safety practices.

In our industry there is a wide variety of business practices. For example, some companies embrace appliance service work, and they sell, install, and repair appliances and piping inside the house.

At the other end of the spectrum, some companies focus on the safe delivery of propane to the house, and do not employ service personnel to install and repair appliances and piping inside the house. These companies direct their customers to qualified plumbing and heating contractors with the appropriate expertise to do such work. And then, of course, many companies fall somewhere between these two ends of the spectrum.

CETP training, whether in the traditional classroom or the E-Learning format, cannot address all of these variations in individual propane marketer business models. And so, those who review the materials or take the E-Learning programs will find that CETP not only outlines basic common princi-

ples that are important for all marketers, but also often refers the student to individual company policies. STARS allows propane marketers to include their own company policies directly in the E-Learning courses, making it easier for a student to review these policies while going through the course materials.

For example, those taking the CETP E-Learning modules on gas odor reports and on service interruptions will be reminded at key points in the presentation to familiarize themselves with, and follow, the specific policies of their company. This note is added because a marketer's response to a gas odor call or service interruption can

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vary, depending on the extent to which the marketer is involved in service and repair work for customer piping and appliances. Once a leak has been found in customer piping, some marketers will respond by repairing the leak themselves; others will leave the gas shut off and advise the customer to call a qualified service professional to do that work.

Another example is the carbon monoxide (CO) report. If a customer calls to report a possible CO problem, some companies respond to the site immediately, while others refer the report to public safety and health officials for an emergency response.

Each propane marketer can, and often will, have its own individual approach in a variety of areas that are covered by CETP. And where companies develop their own individual policies, they will want to incorporate them into their overall training program. They can, of course, have a separate training program to educate employees on individual company policies once they have taken the

appropriate CETP courses. Or, they can incorporate their individual policies and practices within CETP into one efficient training program.

This is where PERC's STARS comes in. It is a computer module that fits seamlessly with PERC's CETP E-Learning modules. Not only does STARS provide marketers a solid and easy-to-use recordkeeping system for their employee training program, but it also allows them to customize basic CETP training modules to incorporate their individual company policies.

STARS allows an employee to be educated on a marketer's individual company policy, while in an area in the same module that contains the basic CETP learning material for that module. So, when the employee reviews the module on service interruptions, he or she will also review the individual company policy on service interruptions.

The STARS program represents yet another PERC-sponsored advance in the efficient, comprehensive, and high-quality training of propane industry employees with the goal of maximum safety for our customers, our employees, and the public.

Further information on CETP textbooks, DVDs, and STARS, as well as other PERC-funded safety, training, and education initiatives, may be viewed at [www.propanesafety.com](http://www.propanesafety.com) and ordered at [www.propanecatalog.com](http://www.propanecatalog.com).

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