



July 2018

## Continued Education with Hazmat Drill Exercises and Training

### **Ensuring a continued learning model by performing drills and continuous training**

Many short line railroads handle hazardous materials. Based on our Safety Culture Assessment systematic review results, we identified a need for short line railroads to conduct more hazmat drills and exercises. Regularly performing hazmat drills with your railroad's personnel, and involving local community resources could improve knowledge and preparedness. Drills allow for hands-on learning, and they promote open communication throughout the company and with the other parties involved. Drills and proper training can help to prevent and mitigate risk when handling hazardous materials. Utilizing drills and training as a method of continuing education for your railroad can also demonstrate leadership's commitment to safety and could help build greater trust throughout the organization by performing one or more of the below tasks in a collaborative and inclusive way:

#### ***Ensure you have the systems in place to perform training or a drill:***

##### **Training:**

Training classes are required for any carrier that handles hazardous materials and has qualified hazmat employees, and they must be offered both initially and as a recurring training event. The SLSI offers a Hazmat Training Program that supplements the Hazmat Material Regulations, or HMR. We offer a comprehensive one day train-the-trainer program and a direct employee training program presented by our hazardous materials experts. For more information about our Hazmat Training Program, please contact [HMIT@shortlinesafety.org](mailto:HMIT@shortlinesafety.org).

##### **Drills:**

Although hazmat drills may be conducted differently across railroads, safety must always be the top priority

Below is a list of tips on what you could include in your hazmat drills:

- Communicate each step of the drill throughout the railroad
- Ensure your organization understands when and where a drill will be taking place to ensure appropriate responses throughout the performance of the drill
- Ensure you communicate with local communities about the drill, including the details of what will be occurring, and its location and date. Include local emergency responders, and prep them with railroad safety knowledge and property awareness including where to park vehicles, safe distances for rails, and operations or live track rules
- Ensure that all parties understand this is a drill for educational and preparedness purposes
- Check to make sure you have an emergency plan in place
- Communicate this emergency plan throughout the railroad and ensure it is widely known
- After the drill, have a debrief with the group involved



- Take notes of what systems worked well and what could use some improvements or policy or procedure adjustments
- Offer suggestions and feedback evaluations of the drill for future ideas and enhancements
- Consider taking a review test or have a question/answer session after the drill with all parties involved

*For more information about hazmat training, please contact us at [HMIT@shortlinesafety.org](mailto:HMIT@shortlinesafety.org)*

*For more safety tips, please see our website, [www.shortlinesafety.org](http://www.shortlinesafety.org)*