

Alabama Natural Gas Association

Gas Worker Training & Assessment Program

In an effort to *sponsor and conduct conferences, schools and programs that inform and train personnel of the gas industry*, ANGA, working with an external consultant and subject matter experts from many member companies, has developed a program designed to help companies more effectively train employees newly hired in the Gas Worker position. **Gas Worker** for the purposes of this program, is the position that works up to the meter but rarely, if ever in the house. The primary responsibilities include working on a crew that installs, renews, moves, and retires mains and/or services and repairs leaks on mains and/or services. The job differs slightly from company to company as does the job title.

The purpose of the Training & Assessment Program is to help ANGA member companies with their efforts in training new hires in this position – Gas Worker. ANGA is providing access to this program at no charge. However, before you put the program into use at your company, it's important to be aware of a number of guidelines about the use of the program. Ensuring your company puts the program in place correctly will give you the best possible outcome.

Background

The Training & Assessment Program was developed under the guidance of an external expert using the input of ANGA members. It began with a thorough analysis and study of the job using individuals in this entry-level position, referred to as *Gas Worker* in this project, across the state. This Program was based on the outcome of that study.

Using subject matter experts (SMEs) – individuals performing the job of Gas Work (or whatever the individual companies call the job – numerous ANGA member groups participated in the Program development process. That group of SMEs worked with the external expert to develop the Program.

The Program

This Program includes three primary parts, each of which is described below. Your company may choose to use all three parts or just one or two parts, depending on your needs. The Program includes:

- Four Technical Training Task Plans: *Plan A Training Tasks* through *Plan D Training Tasks*
- Four Technical Assessment Plans: *Plan A Assessment* through *Plan D Assessment*

Each of the eight items about covers technical material related to the job of Gas Worker and has been created to present information based on the time on the job. That means that the material covered in *Plan A Training Tasks* could be considered basic compared to *Plan B*.

- An Assessment of non-Technical Aspects of the Job: General Assessment

You'll also see a sheet titled *Program at a Glance*. This is not a *component* of the Program. However, it does present the entire Program on a single page. The *Program at a Glance* provides a one-page overview of what the Program covers in each Technical Training Task Plan. That may be helpful to you and others in your company to get a better understanding of what the new employee will be learning through the 180-day timeline of the Program and when each concept or activity will be introduced.

Technical Training Task Plans

There are four Technical Training Task Plans. They are designed to be administered one after the other, as each Plan builds on knowledge and skills covered in the prior Plan. They were designed with the entry-level Gas Worker with limited experience in a related field in mind. If you have a Gas Worker who is coming in from another utility company or even just construction work, they may go some Plan A materials, like *Tools, Equipment & Materials* with great ease. However, this was designed for the person that may come in having never done this type of work.

Each Plan has its own recommended timeline. The SME group recommended that the trainee have 30 days to cover Plan A and 30 days to cover Plan B and then 60 days each to cover Plans C and Plan D. That makes the entire program 180 days or roughly six months. Some trainees could take slightly more or less time depending on their experience level coming in and their ability and drive to learn how to do this type of work.

The *Training Task Plans* are best used in the following manner:

- Give the new Gas Worker the *Plan A Training Tasks* the first day he/she is ready to go out on the job. Explain that this is what he/she will be expected to learn over the next 30 days *and* that he/she will be assessed on his/her mastery of the material at the end of the 30-day period. Show the trainee the different sections that will be covered, that he/she should follow along and initial (or make a check mark) when something is covered, and to ask if he/she hasn't seen something or needs to see it again. This is the trainee's copy. They keep it. You do not need it back.
- Give the person they are working with a copy of the *Plan A Training Tasks* so that he/she will know what the trainee is covering during the time the trainee is riding with him/her. This will ensure he/she can discuss those things as time permits and that everyone is on the same page.
- Ensure the supervisor of the trainee has a copy of the *Plan A Training Tasks*.

Technical Assessment

The Assessments were designed by the SMEs to allow the trainee the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the material just covered in the training tasks plan during the prior 30 (or 60) days. The Assessments were designed to be hands-on with practical to do-so, but some of them are questions or hands-on with follow-up questions. There are no pencil and paper questions. Thus, the Assessments should not be given to the trainee.

The *Assessments* are best used in the following manner:

- Give the Assessment at the end of each Plan period. *Plan A Assessment* should ideally be given on day 31 or somewhat close to it, but after the trainee completes *Plan A Training Tasks*. *Plan D Assessment* should be given on day 181-185 or somewhat close to it, but after the trainee completes *Plan D Training Tasks*. Your trainee may be ready early, particularly if he/she has come from another utility company.
- The Assessment should be administered by a supervisor or lead employee very familiar with the Gas Worker job.
- The person administering the Assessment should look through the Assessment and make the necessary preparations before beginning.
- If a trainee fails a section, remedial training and re-testing may be appropriate.

General Assessment

The *General Assessment* is an ongoing evaluation of non-technical behavior. However, if there are issues with an employee's performance on technical aspects of the job, many times the items on the *General Assessment* will cover

this. The *General Assessment* measures five aspects of employee behavior. These are truly behaviors that almost any employee in any job needs to be successful.

The *General Assessment* is best used in the following manner:

- Use it every month for the employee during the training period.
- Gather input from the individuals he/she has worked with – particularly those who have worked with him/her in a mentoring role. You are just looking for behavioral feedback, not opinions.
- Use this information to complete the form each month. Write behavioral comments on the last several pages of the sheets for your records. If *anything* is unacceptable in any section, you should provide an unacceptable rating overall in that section so that you can allow the employee to address the issue.
- Meet with the trainee to give feedback. He/she receives the top sheet. This shouldn't be a long meeting. Tell him/her what he/she is doing well and if improvement is needed.
- Keep the documentation in your files.

Other Information about the Program

1. This Program was developed by an SME group representing several ANGA groups in hopes that it could be used by most, if not all, ANGA groups who want to use it. Naturally, there will be some parts of the program that will not apply to your company. Some companies have cast iron, others do not. Some use one method, and others use another to complete a new service installation. There is a vast difference in terminology used by different companies. The point is that, as you read through the Program, you will see (1) some sections, (2) some procedures or parts of sections, and (3) some word or terms **that do not apply or are not used by your company.**

As examples: you may not (1) *Insert Steel Services* a section of *Plan C Training Tasks*, (2) use the *main to riser method* when you *Install/Renew a Service Line*, or (3) have any cast iron. The program is in Word, given to you electronically, so that you can make the necessary changes. Following the last example, you may decide to remove the *Insert Steel Services* section and even the *main to riser method* and tell the trainee to ignore the cast iron references, because “we don't have any cast iron.”

2. This program is recommended for use as a developmental tool for new employees. It is not intended to be used to terminate employees who don't meet a specific standard.

3. ANGA developed this Program specifically for the use of its membership. It is not intended for use beyond that purpose. It is the sole property of ANGA and may not be distributed to anyone without written permission from the ANGA Board of Directors. When you give Training Plans to employees of your company for use, they should understand that they are not allowed to distribute it to other employees beyond the approved use of the Program. The Assessments should be given only to Supervisors/Managers for use consistent with the Program instructions.

Any questions about the Program should be directed to Nikki Frost at nikki.frost@magnolia-river.com.