

## Course Attendance and the Ethics Code

### ABIH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

As a continuing educational service, the American Board of Industrial Hygiene (ABIH) will be providing ABIH Diplomates/certificants, other IH professionals, and the public with advisory information regarding ethical conduct issues. This information is intended to explain and clarify ABIH ethics requirements with respect to various issues that arise, and to provide professional guidance.

Recently, the ABIH Ethics Review Committee considered a complaint alleging that a certificant had misrepresented his attendance at a course carrying Certification Maintenance (CM) points. This matter presented two primary ethics questions which were reviewed by the ABIH Ethics Review Committee.

#### *Falsely Claiming CM Points*

Under the relevant ABIH continuing certification policies, a certificant cannot seek Certification Maintenance (CM) credits/points for a course not attended – regardless of whether the course fee has been paid and a receipt has been received. Obviously, a certificant can only claim CM points for that portion of the course/session that was actually attended, despite having a receipt for full tuition and signing an attendance sheet. A CM course receipt simply indicates payment for the course and is not meant to demonstrate actual attendance for the purpose of claiming the full CM points assigned. [Note: CM points are awarded at a rate of 0.5 CM point per half day (minimum of 3 hours of technical content) and 1.0 CM point per full day (minimum of 6 hours of technical content)].

Under the newly adopted ABIH Code of Ethics, as well as the previous Code, misrepresentations concerning course attendance or other CM requirements may constitute violations of our ethical standards, and may result in discipline by ABIH. Certificants are responsible for understanding and fulfilling all CM requirements.

#### *Misrepresenting Professional Education*

The newly revised ABIH Code of Ethics, and the ACGIH/AIHA Member Ethical Principles, clearly state that industrial hygienists shall "properly use professional credentials, and provide truthful and accurate representations concerning education, experience, competency and the performance of services." See ABIH Code of Ethics, Section II.A.5. Therefore, the misrepresentation of a certificant's, applicant's or examinee's education and training, including CM courses, may violate these important ethics rules. Thus, the Ethics Review Committee cautions that if a full course is not attended and completed, it should not be listed on a resume or otherwise represented to ABIH, professional associations, government agencies, clients, employers, employees, or the public.

Please review your continuing education responsibilities under the ABIH Code of Ethics. When you apply, and each time you recertify with ABIH, you agree to adhere to the Code of Ethics with respect to all certification-related responsibilities, including those concerning CM points and credit for course attendance.

*What if you suspect a violation of the Ethics Code has occurred?*

Any ethics complaint lodged against a Diplomate, applicant or examinee is addressed pursuant to the requirements of the ABIH Ethics Case Procedures found at the ABIH website.

The ABIH encourages the reporting of possible Code violations, and will process complaints under the procedures outlined on: <http://www.abih.org/general/cihcaih.html>.