



A Training Program Checklist

Here are some things to consider when you're looking for a quality renewable energy/solar energy training program:

- Is the organization ISPQ-accredited?
- Is there sufficient equipment and hardware for students?
- Does the curriculum cover all the objectives for NABCEP's Entry Level Exam Program, or NABCEP's PV and Solar Thermal Installer Job Analyses?
- Are the instructors qualified? What is their experience with renewable energy? Are they experienced professionals who also teach? What is their teaching experience; are they certified instructors?
- Is the organization part of a recognized apprenticeship program, or does the organization offer vocational training?
- If you are seeking training for future employment, find out if former students found work after completing the course.

About NABCEP:



The North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) is a volunteer board of renewable energy stakeholder representatives that includes representatives of the solar industry, NABCEP certificants, renewable energy organizations, state policy makers, educational institutions, and the trades. Each member of the board was chosen because of his or her experience and involvement in the renewable energy industry. NABCEP's mission — to support, and work with, the renewable energy and energy efficiency industries, professionals, and stakeholders — is intended to develop and implement quality credentialing and certification programs for practitioners.

About IREC:



The Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) has worked aggressively to remove barriers to renewable energy use since 1982. The organization has been instrumental in rulemaking for connecting distributed power to the utility grid, workforce development, consumer protection and stakeholder coordination. IREC is the North American Licensee for the ISPQ Accreditation of Renewable Energy Training Programs and the Certification of Trainers. IREC houses on-line directories listing renewable energy training providers and university degree programs (www.irecusa.org).

About SEIA:



Established in 1974, the Solar Energy Industries Association is the national trade association of solar energy industry. As the voice of the industry, SEIA works with its 1,000 member companies to make solar a mainstream and significant energy source by expanding markets, removing market barriers, strengthening the industry and educating the public on the benefits of solar energy. Learn more at www.seia.org.

Selecting a Renewable Energy Training Program:

What to look for

What to look for

One of the most frequent questions we hear at NABCEP is, “Where can I get NABCEP training?” The answer is simple: NABCEP does not offer training programs. Being in the business of training people to pass our exams would compromise their credibility, so we simply don’t teach. Since NABCEP can’t recommend a specific training institution, we’ve prepared this document to help you in your search for a quality renewable energy/solar energy training program.

Our Certification and Entry Level programs assess knowledge through examinations. All of NABCEP’s essential documents that make up the foundation of our examinations, like the job analysis for certification programs and the learning objectives for entry level exams, are on our website at www.nabcep.org. These documents clearly articulate what will be covered in our exams and are widely used by educators as a “blueprint” for developing quality curriculum.

Whether you’re just starting out, have years of on-the-job experience, are considering a career change or simply interested in learning new skills, you want to be able to compare content, quality and resources across a dizzying landscape of renewable energy training programs. You’re making a significant investment of time and money. Ask about the instructors, find out what equipment will be used, make sure class size fosters one-on-one instruction and ensures safety and safe procedures. If you want training to become a Certified PV or Solar Thermal



Installer, make sure the course you choose includes installation experience as part of the curriculum.

With more than one hundred different organizations offering training for the NABCEP Entry Level PV Exam program, and dozens more that offer advanced training to candidates for NABCEP Installer Certification, chances are you’ll find what you’re looking for in a quality renewable energy training program. Finally, the level of knowledge you bring with you to the classroom will help you select the appropriate renewable energy training program.

Here is a short list of resources that may be helpful for you in finding a training program:

Organizations registered to offer the NABCEP Photovoltaic Entry Level Exam

Visit www.nabcep.org and follow the links to “Certificates” and then to “For Students” to find a list of the organizations that offer the NABCEP Photovoltaic Entry Level Exam.

The Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) maintains listings of college and vocational training programs visit their site www.irecusa.org and follow the links.

Quality Training...

Look for the ISPQ Mark

The Interstate Renewable Energy Council’s (IREC) goal is to ensure that training for the renewable energy trades leads to defined workplace knowledge and skills and appropriately addresses issues of safety and codes.

To make sure that there is continuity, consistency, and quality in the delivery of training, IREC is implementing the Institute for Sustainable Power’s (ISP) international framework of standards and metrics to provide a means to compare content, quality, and resources across a broad range of renewable energy training programs. This process leads to legitimacy of what’s being taught and by whom.



The ISPQ (Quality) process uses an Industry-approved task analysis to verify, compare and approve course content. Registered auditors perform desk audits and in some cases, on-site audits.

Protect your training investment ...

- Look for the IREC ISPQ Mark of Quality for training programs and instructors.
- Know that the training program has gone through a rigorous third-party evaluation.
- Have confidence that the training uses the right equipment and safety practices.

For the list of ISPQ Awardees, visit www.ispqusa.org

