












# ABIH Newsletter

## October 2010

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The ABIH Newsletter is published three times per year. Current and back copies are available at <http://www.abih.org/general/newsletter.html>

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## News

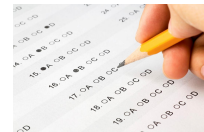


### Faster Service for CM Point Requests

If you've recently submitted a CM point request, you may have noticed some changes in how ABIH is running the process. Last year, we introduced email submission of the request forms. Now, we're emailing the results letters (rather than via traditional postal mail). This increases our accuracy, efficiency and reduces postage costs. More importantly, it now means that you will get the CM results more quickly – which will help when running events or gathering CM approval numbers for your CM Worksheet.

### Are Tests Required or Not for CM Points?

In 2009, ABIH made a change to the criteria for awarding CM points for Distance Learning events. We dropped the requirement for a test, quiz or examination; however, there has been some confusion about the change. Usually, the confusion centers on whether the Diplomate must take a test (and pay a test fee) even though ABIH doesn't require a test anymore.



ABIH awards CM points for a course as submitted by a Course Owner. If the Course Owner includes a test, we consider the test to be an integral part of the course. In that case, the Diplomate must take the test in order to claim the CM points. Stated a little differently, if a Diplomate does not take the test, he/she has not completed the course as designed by the Course Owner and as approved by ABIH.

If the Course Owner does not include a test, ABIH will still award CM points for the course content.

It's also important to remember that many courses have copyrights. Through the purchase contracts and even verbal agreements, the Course Owner may set additional terms of use (e.g., reduced fees, number of participants). These agreements are independent of ABIH unless they alter the course content or length as approved by ABIH.

Course Owners have a choice on whether to include a test or not as part of their course. The test is often included as a means to ensure that the learning objectives were achieved or in some cases, to deliver more learning. If you feel that a test is not necessary, you should contact the Course Owners and lobby for a change.

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## How Hard Is the CIH Exam?

We get asked this question or a variation of it quite often. To be clear – the exam is hard but it's not impossible as you well know. The pass rate over the last ten years has gone from ~30% to ~40%. Is the exam getting easier? We don't think so.

The exam questions are controlled through a very rigorous process using the latest psychometric techniques. So we have great confidence that the exam's degree of difficulty has been consistent over the past 10 years.

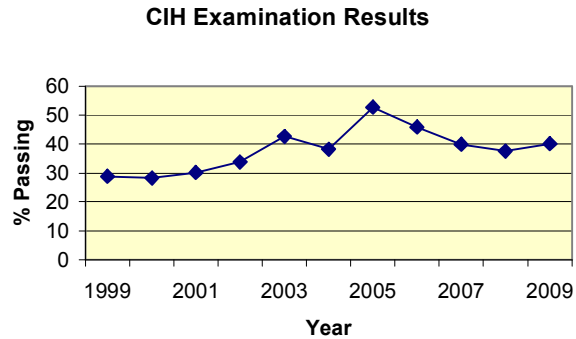
Instead, the more likely explanation in the fluctuating pass rate is the *population readiness*. ABIH can partially influence this through the qualification requirements which we control. For example:

- Requiring a minimum amount IH coursework for those applicants not from an ABET accredited IH program. (Phase in started in 2002; fully achieved in 2006)
- Lowering the required experience from 5 to 4 years (eff. 2006)
- Eliminating the minimum time percentage for practicing IH (eff. 2006)
- Crediting professional level IH experience prior to completion of a bachelor's degree (eff. 2006)

Factors outside the control of ABIH include items such as individual preparation, coaching/mentoring opportunities, types of experiences, and quality of education or training.

Failing the exam on the first attempt happens to a lot of people. After all, it is a hard exam but there is hope. Of the cohort population that initially takes an exam, an additional ~20% will go on to pass the exam within 3 years. So based on past trends, approximately 60% of the recent examinees will eventually become certified.

Although not shown in the chart above, the exam pass rate was 38% for the most recent testing window (Spring 2010). The breakdown of test-takers from this group revealed that 38% of first time examinees passed; 33% of repeat test-takers passed; and, 100% of CIHs taking the exam for certification maintenance passed.




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## ABIH Financial Audit for FY 2009



A summary of ABIH's 2009 audited financial statement is available on the ABIH web site. No items of concern were identified. ABIH remains on firm financial ground.

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## CM Program Changes Coming in 2011-12



ABIH has recently completed an equity analysis across the entire CM program. As a result, several changes will be implemented over the next two years in various stages. Changes were mostly made to increase consistency, reduce costs, enhance revenue, and position ABIH as a top-quartile professional certification firm.

Here's a brief listing of the changes. Some of these will be discussed in more detail when the changes are implemented

- Eliminating the 'Fundamental' CM point category. In the future, these courses will be awarded "IH" CM points. The cap of 5 "Fundamental" points per five year CM cycle will also be eliminated.
- Establishing a cap of 5 'IH Ethics' points per five year CM cycle.
- Establishing a *Leave of Absence Policy* that would allow a Diplomate to take time off (e.g. up to 2 years) due to extraordinary circumstances
- Transitioning some Diplomates to a different 5 year calendar for their CM cycle, e.g., July 1 Year 1 to June 30<sup>th</sup> Year 5 instead of the current January 1, Year 1 to December 31, Year 5.
- Providing a CM approval number for all Category 4 – Education events thus making all the events searchable in the online ABIH Category 4 database. This change will include the AIHce, PCIH, their associated PDCs, "Blanket-Approved" events and Academic courses.
- Offering an expedited CM point review (2 business day turnaround for \$50)
- Revising the *Category 7 – Other* program by adding new ways to earn CM points and eliminating some ways that are no longer compatible with the CM program.
- Implementing a new penalty - loss of certification after 2.5 years of non-payment of the annual fees. (Note: Payment of annual fees is a condition of maintaining certification yet some Diplomates go 2, 3, and even 4 years without paying).
- Changing the penalties for late CM Worksheets (submitted > Feb 1<sup>st</sup>), e.g. increased fees and increased audit probability.

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## Key Dates

<b>Sept 1, '10 – Feb 1</b>	<b>CM Worksheets</b> – now being accepted 2006-2010 CM cycle. After February 1, you'll need to pay a late fee of \$100
<b>Oct 1, '10 – Jan 15</b>	<b>2011 Fees</b> – Invoices for the 2011 fees of \$115 were recently emailed or postal mailed (if no email address was available) to all Diplomates. If paid after Jan 15 <sup>th</sup> , the fee is \$165 which includes a late fee of \$50.
<b>Dec 31, 2010</b>	<b>2006-2010 CM Cycle Diplomates</b> - Last day to earn CM points for 2006-2010 CM cycle. This includes the new "ethics" requirement of at least 0.33 ethics CM points during the 5 year cycle. FAQ are available on the ABIH web site. ( <a href="http://www.abih.org/members/cmfaq.html#Ethics">http://www.abih.org/members/cmfaq.html#Ethics</a> )
<b>Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011</b>	<b>Spring 2011 Examinations</b> - last day to submit an application and <i>all</i> of the supporting documents (i.e., references, transcripts, and IH coursework documentation)

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## Diplomate U

### CM Audits - What Is The Random Process?

In the June 2010 Newsletter, we listed some tips for surviving a CM audit. Since that article, we received a few more inquiries about the process itself. Is it really random? Why don't we target or profile Diplomates of concern? How do I appeal an audit selection? And the Big Kahuna question – I've already been audited once, why am I being audited again?

ABIH randomly selects 5% of the CM Worksheets for audit. In the past we've audited up to 10% of the CMWs and may do so again in the future. The process itself is really very simple. CMWs are submitted via email, fax or postal mail. They are stacked chronologically and every 20<sup>th</sup> CMW is selected for an audit. It's that simple.

We don't target or profile individual Diplomates because that would eliminate the 'random' aspect of our program. More importantly, we believe that any profiling criteria would be too subjective and thus, less defensible as a solid program. On the other hand, ABIH does reserve the right to ask for audit materials from any Diplomate for any reason. This right is exercised very rarely.

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## CM Audits - What is the “Random” Process?, continued

In the audit process, there is an equal likelihood (1/20<sup>th</sup>) of being selected for an audit each time the CMW is submitted. Since audit selections are independent events in each CM cycle, the probability of being selected twice is 1 in 400. While this is small, it’s still a distinct possibility since we process literally thousands of CM Worksheets.

If a Diplomate is audited once and then knows that they won’t be audited again, the purpose of the audit program is defeated. The Audit purpose is to corroborate the activities as claimed for CM on a CM Worksheet, not to question the integrity or credibility of the Diplomate.

We do not have an “Audit Selection Appeals” process. As with profiling, creating criteria to exempt some Diplomates would be subjective and eliminate the random aspects of selection. Being audited once (and passing) does not guarantee that the next audit will be successful. This is true in most work situations and is certainly true for ABIH.

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## The 5 Most Common Mistakes When Requesting CM Pts

ABIH processes >6000 CM point requests per year and we’re coming up on the busiest time of the year (Dec-Jan) when processing time can be 6 weeks or more due to the large volume. At this time of year, many Diplomates are in a rush to get the CM Approval Numbers and Points for their CM Worksheet submission.



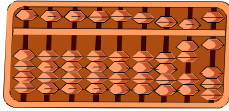
Here are the most common mistakes which slow us down, may cause more work for you and will ultimately delay the point reviews.

1. **Activity Is Already Approved** – Check the ABIH online database *before* completing a CM Point Request form.
2. **Missing Support Information** – We need documents or web sites which show the subject matter and the allotted time (or assigned CEUs).
3. **Out-of-Date Forms** – Older CM Point Request Forms do not have the most current information that we use for processing.
4. **Illegible Content** - Poor handwriting, especially when faxed, leads to illegible information. In some cases, we can’t even read the Requestor’s name making follow up rather difficult.
5. **Providing All Presentation Materials** – It’s usually best to submit the minimal amount of information. If we need more information (and we often do not), we will ask for it.

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## Category 1 Point Calculator in 2010 CM Worksheet

The CM Worksheet has undergone some cosmetic and functional changes over the past year. We've been offering an Excel version of the CMW since 2009. This version automates the point calculations and has a few built in conditional formulas that prevent some mistakes (like trying to claim more than 5 CM pts in Category 2 – Professional Committee Service).



One feature that you may have missed is the Category 1 - Active IH Practice point calculator. It's on a 2<sup>nd</sup> tab in the workbook. It's primarily useful for those Diplomates who've changed jobs or changed responsibilities during the course of a year. The calculator provides an easy way to account for the percentage of time spent doing IH work and then determining the number of CM points that can be claimed in Category 1 for

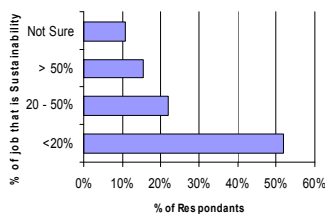
that 12 month period. It accounts for up to 3 different jobs in a 12 month period.

## The Diplomate Pulse! - Sustainability Survey

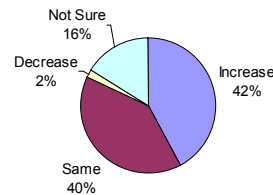
In June, ABIH asked about Diplomates' involvement in Sustainability – a newer word in our lexicon that has different meanings to different people. Results of that survey are listed below.

The majority of Diplomates believe that they have some involvement with Sustainability within their current job responsibilities. And more importantly, the majority believes that it's likely to increase in the coming years. If you find yourself in the "Not Sure" category, it may be time to ask some more questions about Sustainability within your organization.

How much of your job today contains Sustainability-related aspects? (n=110)



Will your Sustainability responsibilities change in the next 2 years? (n=110)



**Got 30 more seconds?**

**How have you met the new Ethics Requirement?**



<https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=dGVydnpmMS2pHeDhYRncyOWJjTXN1RWc6MQ>

Submissions are anonymous. Final results will be published in the next ABIH Newsletter.



# Stay Connected

## Director Activities

ABIH Directors are actively engaged with the Diplomate community and routinely represent ABIH on matters of strategic interest. Directors are available to help Local Sections through their active participation and interest.

1. Jeff Throckmorton represented ABIH on an AIHA Ethics Teleweb in August which included over 100 sites of participation. As one of several presenters, Jeff's material focused on the various codes of ethics. The topic of ethics remains of great interest to the Diplomate community mostly due to the ABIH 'ethics' requirement whereby a Diplomate must accrue at least 2 hours of ethics training every 5 year CM cycle. For more information about the ethics requirement: <http://www.abih.org/members/cmfaq.html#Ethics>
2. Mark Finn provided an ABIH Director's 2010 Update at two AIHA Local Sections: a) the Michigan Industrial Hygiene Society's Annual Fall Mini Conference on October 19, 2010, and b) the Deep South Local Section meeting on October 21, 2010. Mark's presentation focused on the ABIH organization, role of the Directors, the "new" ethics requirement and ABIH's strategic direction.

## Meet Your Directors - Charles Laszewski & Shamini Samuel

Each year, ABIH elects several new Board Directors as others rotate off. We use the ABIH Newsletter as one means of introducing them to our Diplomates. Both of these Directors were elected to the Board in 2010.



**Charles Laszewski**, is the Public Member serving on our Board. Charles is the Communications Lead for the environmental non-profit, Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota. He has previously served as Communications Director for the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, and has served as reporter for the St. Paul Pioneer Press. Chuck obtained his B.A. in Journalism from the University of Minnesota. In 2005, Chuck published his first book, *Rock 'n Roll Radical: The Life and Mysterious Death of Dean Reed*.

We asked Chuck-*What did you know about IH before joining the Board?*

“During my time covering the environment as a reporter, I wound up talking to a couple of industrial hygienists. I came to understand some of what they did and found them knowledgeable and often helpful in explaining how their company or factory worked. That left me with a good feeling towards them and their profession, so it was easy to say yes when I was asked to serve on the board”.

Chuck can be contacted at [claszewski@parksandtrails.org](mailto:claszewski@parksandtrails.org).

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NOTE: ABIH is required by its accreditation and bylaws to have a "public member" on our Board. ABIH believes that this member should be independent, i.e. not an industrial hygienist, environmental scientist or safety professional. Most importantly, the public member's role is to ask the questions we would not think to ask ourselves. The Public Director serves a 2-year term with an option to return for two more years.



**Shamini Samuel**, ROH, CIH, CSP, is a Sr. Industrial Hygienist at Suncor Energy Services, Inc. Previously, she held positions with consulting, semi-government and private industry firms in Canada and Malaysia, thus bringing a wealth of practical knowledge to the Board. She has a Bachelor of Engineering (Environmental) from the University of Western Australia and Masters of Technology (Environmental Management) from the University of Malaysia. In addition, Shamini has served in a number of volunteer roles with the Malaysian Industrial Hygiene Association and the AIHA. She's the author of numerous articles on environmental health and safety.

Shamini was asked - *What are the major challenges facing ABIH?*

"I believe there are two primary opportunities. First, the number of qualified industrial hygienists, let alone CIHs, in the growing economies of the world is a concern to me. This is especially true in the fast growing economies of Asia that need qualified IH professionals either by increasing the number of local industrial hygienists or from other regions. ABIH's CIH program ensures that a measurable level of professional quality has been achieved by an individual pursuing Industrial Hygiene as a career. Companies worldwide have grown to depend upon its brand recognition and hence ABIH needs to have a bigger and stronger footprint in these regions.

Second, it appears that the enrollment of students in North American IH academic programs is on the decline, even though the need for qualified industrial hygienists remains relatively stable. This trend indicates that there will be a smaller pool of potential candidates to take the CIH exams and even less qualified people to serve the public good. To reverse this trend, ABIH, through The Academy and the AIHA, will need to take an aggressive role in encouraging entry level college students or even high school students to take an interest in IH and promote the value of the profession and the ABIH certification. This initiative should not be limited to North America, but should extend to other regions via the encouragement of partnerships between North American universities and institutions of higher learning in developing countries.

Shamini resides in Calgary and is a member of the Alberta AIHA local section. In addition, she serves as the Director liaison for the Blue Ridge, BC/Yukon, Central VA, Chesapeake, Manitoba and Tidewater local sections. She can be contacted at [ssamuel@suncor.com](mailto:ssamuel@suncor.com).

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## Board Actions

### ■ Code of Ethics Disciplinary Issues

- Linda Kincaid, #9189CP has been sanctioned by the Ethics Review Committee

### ■ Not Certified - In response to inquiries, ABIH reports that the following individuals have never been certified by the Board and are not authorized to use the Certified Industrial Hygienist or CIH designation.

- Carol E. Henri, Brantford, Ontario, Canada
- Bill Williams, Industrial Hygiene Services, Portland, OR

### ■ Lost Diplomat - ABIH has been unable to locate the following individual. If you know how to contact this person, please email [ptrim@abih.org](mailto:ptrim@abih.org)

- Robert Vincent Williams, Blue Ridge Paper Products, Canton, NC

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## ABIH Staff & Office Hours

The ABIH Staff will be pleased to work with you on any questions you may have about this Newsletter or other topics related to ABIH and its certification programs. Feel free to contact any one of the Staff as listed on our web site - <http://www.abih.org/general/staff.html>

ABIH office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, EST with exception of the following periods when the office is closed:

	<b>Holiday</b>
May 31	U.S. Memorial Day
July 5	U.S. Independence Day
Sept 6	U.S. Labor Day
Nov 25 & 26	U.S. Thanksgiving
Dec 24 – Jan 3	Christmas and New Years

If you have any comments about this pabulum, please contact Tracy Parsons- [tparsons@abih.org](mailto:tparsons@abih.org) ; 517-321-2638 x15.

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