



Construction and Materials TIPS

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SOILS AND BASE CERTIFICATION

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For several years now, Texas Asphalt Pavement Association (TXAPA) has been administering soils and base training and certification classes for industry and TxDOT personnel at its facility in Buda, TX. Initially, utilization of this program by TxDOT Districts was optional, with the other option being to continue to use TxDOT's in-house program. During a Quality Assurance Program review by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), TxDOT's use of two organizations to train and certify testing personnel was flagged as a source of potential risk.

In order to eliminate this risk and minimize burden on the districts, the Construction Division has contracted with TXAPA to take soils and base certification classes on the road to the Districts. TXAPA will send instructors to Districts to conduct training and certification on-site for TxDOT personnel. All TXAPA instructors have been certified by TxDOT's Construction Division, which will maintain oversight over the program.

The program was initially piloted in the Dallas District in June 2013 and officially launched in January 2014. District scheduling will parallel the existing three-year District laboratory certification schedule under the Quality Assurance Program (QAP). The initial district certification will require the full training courses. After that, the recertification level will be available for those technicians who are certified by TXAPA. A Construction Division representative will be in close coordination with Districts on scheduling and other logistics.

The TXAPA District training and certification program currently covers three soils and base certification levels:

- SB101 – Properties Specialist
- SB102 – Field Specialist
- SB103 – Materials Analyst Specialist

These training classes will be delivered during a one-week period. Follow-up visits may be scheduled to address certification needs exceeding class capacity. For more information and a complete list of procedures covered in each class, visit www.txhmac.org. Certified technicians will continue to be required to participate in an annual proficiency sample program administered by the Construction Division.

We believe this program will not only save Districts considerable time and effort currently spent certifying and training personnel, it will also foster uniform methodology and practice in the performance of tests across department and industry lines.

For more information, contact TxDOT's Construction Division at 512-506-5802.