

What Retailers Need to Know about Certified NH3 Grower Training

The Illinois Department of Agriculture now requires that all growers or grower farm operators who transport or apply anhydrous ammonia, or otherwise maintain anhydrous ammonia equipment, shall be certified to understand the properties of ammonia, to become competent in safe operating practices, and to take appropriate actions in the event of a leak or an emergency.

Initial certification shall be achieved no later than **April 1, 2022** and growers and grower farm operators must participate in refresher training every **three** years.

Training applies to those individuals who transport or handle anhydrous ammonia:

- Farmers/Growers
- Farm Employees
- Family Members
- Others That Help
- Out of State Farmers/Growers

Certified grower training must be offered at no cost via the IDOA on-line program: <https://onenet.illinois.gov/page.aspx?item=128037> or the IDA approved classroom materials which will be provided to qualified persons who attend the upcoming "train the trainer" courses.

NOTE: Growers are not required to be certified to purchase anhydrous ammonia; one reason for this is because some farmers, farm managers and landlords who purchase anhydrous ammonia do not directly handle or apply it.

When a grower successfully completes either the on-line or in-person training, IDOA will provide the grower/grower farm operators with a certificate. The certification shall be for a period of 3 years and refresher training shall be at least every 3 years. Documentation of completed training shall be maintained by the grower or grower farm operator.

However, IFCA encourages all ag retailers who offer ammonia for sale to growers to request, and maintain on file, a copy of the grower's current certificate and to encourage growers to get certified as soon as practical.

See the illustration of the IDOA issued grower certificate.

At this time we do not anticipate that IDOA will provide ag retailers with access to a database of the growers who have achieved certification. Therefore, it is important for ag retailers to be proactive and request the certificates from your growers customers who transport, apply or own their own ammonia applicators. Ag retailers play a critical role in the communication and overall compliance with this new requirement, which is meant to improve ammonia safety and ensure effective emergency response to ammonia incidents. IFCA recommends that retailers develop a list of all grower customers who pick up ammonia from their facilities or apply ammonia that is delivered by the retailer. We realize this may create some additional paperwork, however this will provide a means of protection for retailers, much like the documentation you keep on sales of restricted use pesticides.

On the next page is a sample letter you can customize and send to your grower customers that explains the requirements, including your request to have them provide you a copy of their certificate **prior to April 1, 2022**. You can download this flyer and the sample letter at www.ifca.com; go to the feature "Are you looking for more information about anhydrous ammonia?" For questions or assistance, contact IFCA at 309.827.2774.



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