

Filling Critical Gaps through Innovative Cradle-to-Grave Training Grant
Future Action Plan
October 13, 2017

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) and the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities (DFWCC) Coalition has been working on the Filling Critical Gaps (FCG) grant since 2015. This project has enhanced and provided training on alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) to reach mechanics/technicians, first responders, public safety officials, and other critical service providers across a multi-state region. The objective of this Future Action Plan (FAP) is to explore and encourage the potential impending trainings in the South Central Clean Cities Region.

The grant provided 20 training classes scheduled with the National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium (NAFTC) focused on mechanics and first responder trainings and 10 training classes with FS Circle focused on public safety officials for a total of 30 classes. Additional classes were held as part of in-kind match to the overall grant. These classes were held in four states in the South Central Clean Cities Region: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. More than 350 first responders, alternative fuel technicians/mechanics, public safety officials, and other critical service providers registered and attended these classes.

Over the course of the grant period, DFWCC and its subrecipients: Arkansas Energy Office (AEO), Long Star Clean Fuels Alliance (LSCFA), Louisiana Clean Fuels (LCF), NAFTC, Regional Planning Organization (RPC), and Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG) have been able to learn the best practices when hosting a training and the lessons learned from the successes and shortcomings of each event. A survey was created by the DFWCC for the subrecipients to provide their general feedback about the grant. The FAP has been created based on the results of this survey, as well as subrecipient comments, and have been documented in the following categories: Best Practices, Obstacles & Lessons Learned, and Sustainability of Projects.

Best Practices

Timeline

- List the possible steps needed for the training to take place, whether it be signatures needed from executive personnel, securing locations, or booking the training event.
- Estimate the amount of time it would take for each step and back into the training date.
- Allow a one to three months for marketing the training event. Ex. More marketing time may be needed for safety officials and first responders due to their schedules.

Partners

- Work with nonprofits, state and local governments, and municipalities to help market and promote the trainings.
- Research organizations to connect with to create partnerships to help promote the goals of the trainings. Ex. For first responder trainings, work with local fire, emergency medical technicians, and police associations to market the trainings to their networks.

- Gage interest in finding a partner that would be interested in sponsoring and paying for lunch or other event costs during the planning process of the training.

Audience

- Know your audience; know their general work schedules. Ex. Marketing to a public safety official and a technician would require different timelines for the training to be approved by their supervisors.
- Work with local organizations to gage interest in your target audience. Ex. Working with the local fire association may help understand if there is a need or interest in alternative fuel training.
- Provide alternative fuel statistics and data to potential attendees during the marketing period to show the need for the training and encourage registration.

Exhibit A

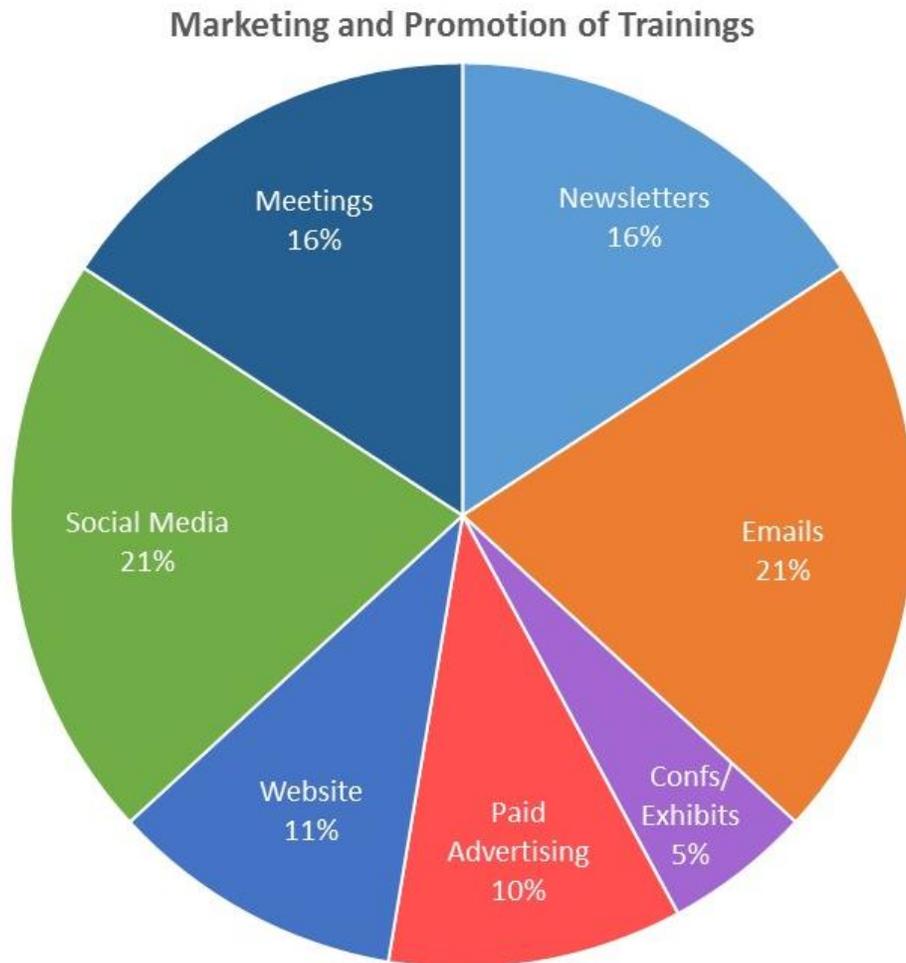


Exhibit A shows marketing efforts from DFWCC and its subrecipients during the grand period. A variety of efforts were used to market the trainings, including: meetings, newsletters, email correspondence, social media, website updates, paid advertising, and exhibits at conferences.

Obstacles & Lessons Learned

When planning and executing the trainings, unexpected obstacles occasionally occurred. The obstacles and lessons learned have been categorized and detailed as: Training Location, Audience, and Continuing Education Credits.

Training Location

- For the RPC's Southeast Louisiana Clean Fuel Partnership, problems arose when facilities realized they couldn't accommodate the training due to the week-long duration it took occupying the facility and staff time.
 - Reach out to multiple facilities to gauge interest and partnership.
 - Provide needed documentation and training information in advance so facilities know what to expect.

Audience

- For the DFWCC and LSCFA, training attendance started off low due to the priority of the training topic and the work schedules of the attendees. For first responders, most have irregular schedules; ex. 48 hours on, 48 hours off.
 - Provide options for the first responder to attend a shortened course.
- For the DFWCC area, first responders were hesitant on taking the course because it was not a priority when compared to safety and hazmat trainings.
 - Offer the course at no-cost and provide data and statistics of alternative fuel growth. As more residents in the region own and/or operate AFVs, it's important for first responders to learn the characteristics of each fuel type to safely approach these vehicles that will help improve public safety.
- Due to the nature of the RPC region, the main transportation issue focus was related to The Port of New Orleans. This originally created low interest from The Port of New Orleans officials.
 - Cast a wider net of potential attendees by securing a training location not located on or near the vicinity of the port.

Continuing Education Credits

- Specifically in the AEO region, CE credits could not be obtained by the Arkansas Health Department. For a first responder CE in Arkansas, the course did not obtain enough medical information to be issued CE credits.
 - Research and obtain CE credits during the planning process if possible, and market the CE credits offered.

Exhibit B

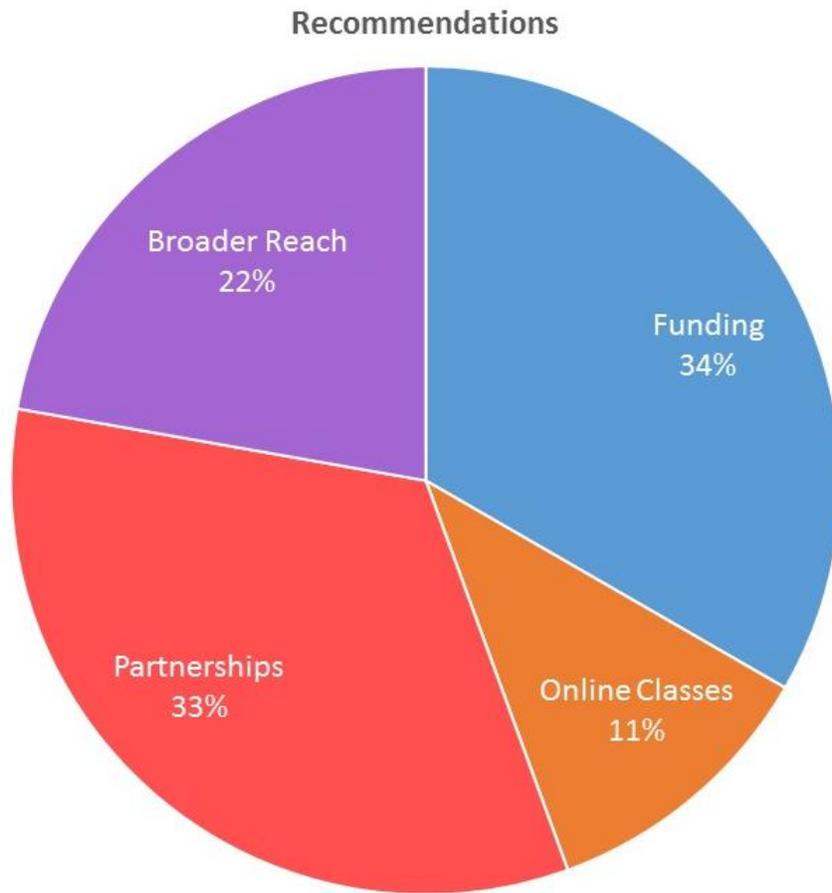


Exhibit B shows recommendations from DFWCC and its subrecipients. A focus on a broader reach for the target audience, more funding, developing partnerships, and online classes were the main recommendations on potential improvements for future trainings.

Sustainability of Projects

The Train-the-Trainer courses benefit the region because post-grant, these trainers that have attended the courses could go on to perform their own trainings and host their own classes. Trainings could then be hosted in more rural areas for more niche participation as well as be hosted more frequently to reach more potential attendees.

During the grant period, interest to become NAFTC training centers were expressed by several community and technical colleges, but due to funding and staffing issues from the colleges, these plans fell through. After multiple attempts through letters, emails, phone calls, and meetings, colleges were unable to work through the financial obstacles despite DFWCC offering subsidies. DFWCC is continuing to investigate becoming an NAFTC Government Member in order to manage and host the trainings at a reduced cost.

DFWCC and its subrecipients plan on working with existing train-the-trainer attendees to plan future trainings using the existing NAFTC curriculum. Funding for future trainings post-grant have been

discussed. DFWCC will work with a participant that attended the previous train-the-trainer class to host a training using the NAFTC curriculum. Depending on the training, funding of the trainer could be pro-bono, or funded through the trainer’s organization and provided as in-kind to the DFWCC. DFWCC, as well as the subrecipients, have expressed interest in finding sponsors to fund future trainings.

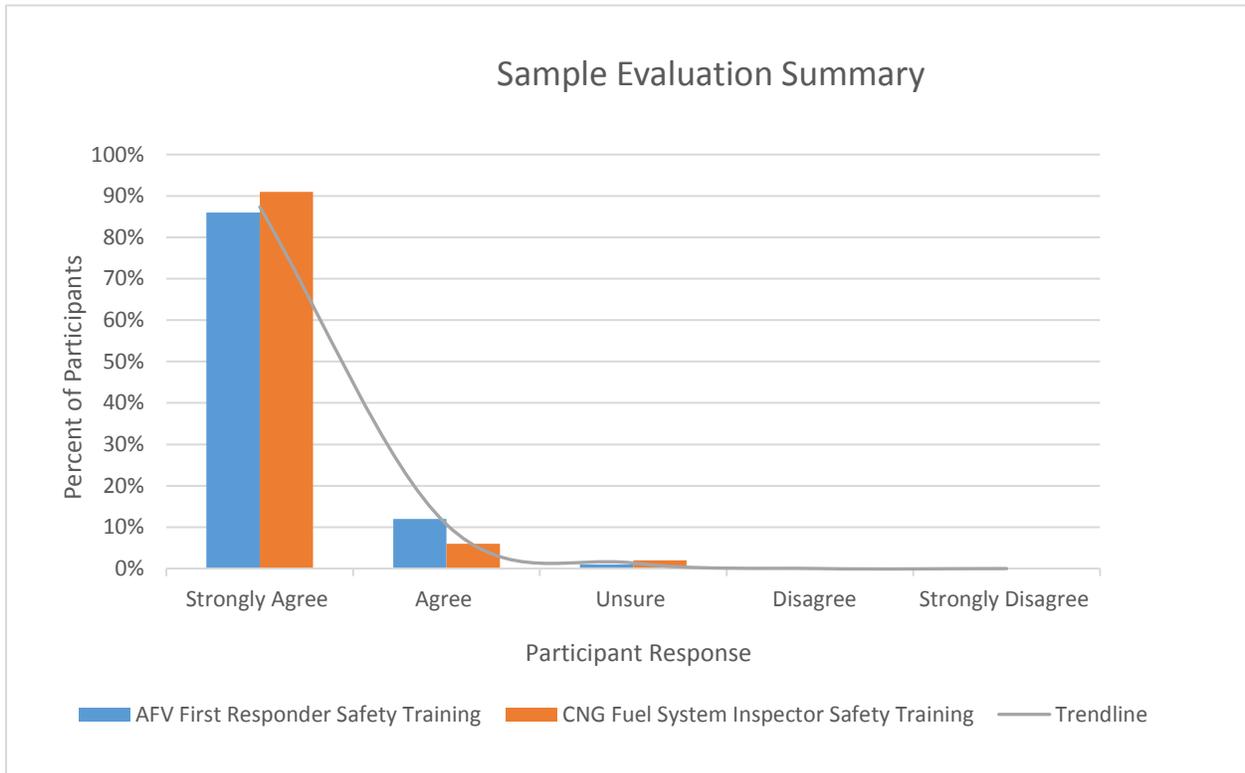
Conclusion

An evaluation sample of the hosted trainings provided an 86% “Strongly Agree” and 12% “Agree” positive response for the AFVs First Responder Safety trainings. A 91% “Strongly Agree” and 6% “Agree” positive response showed for the CNG Fuel System Inspector Safety trainings. Less than 2% in each training category rated “Unsure” and an average of 0% responded “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree” when questioned about positive benefits of the training. The sample grant evaluation summaries are listed below as Exhibit C and D.

Exhibit C

Evaluation Response Summary	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Number of Courses
AFV First Responder Safety Training	86%	12%	1%	0%	0%	5
Part I: The Instructor	93%	7%	0%	0%	0%	
Part II: Course Materials	82%	15%	3%	1%	0%	
Part III: General Teaching and Learning	74%	23%	2%	1%	0%	
Part IV: Course Facilities	98%	2%	0%	0%	0%	
Part V: The reason I took this course was for...						
Work	23					
Academic	-					
Personal	3					
Learn More	3					
Other:	-					
CNG Fuel System Inspector Safety Training	91%	6%	2%	0%	0%	2
Part I: The Instructor	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%	
Part II: Course Materials	82%	12%	6%	0%	0%	
Part III: General Teaching and Learning	92%	4%	4%	0%	0%	
Part IV: Course Facilities	96%	4%	0%	0%	0%	
Part V: The reason I took this course was for...						
Work	15					
Academic	4					
Personal	2					
Learn More	3					
Other:	-					

Exhibit D



The training classes hosted by FS Circle did not provide evaluations after the completion of each course. However, due to the continued positive attendance of each FS Circle training, it could be concluded that these trainings were beneficial and welcomed in the region.

To conclude the grant, DFWCC collected responses from its subrecipients regarding the overall training process during the grant period. The survey responses helped guide the development of the FAP.