



NEWS RELEASE

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Wood Education and Resource Center Begins Beta Testing of Online Training Information Exchange System

PRINCETON, WVa— The U.S. Forest Service Wood Education and Resource Center is currently overseeing beta testing of its online Training Information Exchange System. This system will help individuals in primary and secondary wood products industries locate continuing education training opportunities such as workshops, short courses, seminars, and conferences. System users can search for available training opportunities in the database or automatically receive e-mail notices about training offerings that match specific search criteria.

Participating training organizations can enter available courses online through the Online Training Services Registry System. The system will send a notice to users once it has made a match between training needs and an available training opportunity. The notice will contain additional information about training content, contact information, and related data.

“The Web site will be called HONE, with the idea of ‘sharpen your tools.’ Only in this case, we are not talking about knives and saw blades. The tools we are concerned with are skills, knowledge, and information, and the sharpening of these tools through training. These are the tools needed for today’s global and technologically oriented economy. It is through training and continual updating that these tools are sharpened,” said U.S. Forest Service Forest Products Specialist Al Steele. The system will be available for general use after the independent testing and program updates are completed.

The Training Information Exchange System offers benefits for both training participants and providers, including:

- An automatic e-mail system that notifies participants about offerings that meet specific training requirements;

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- An easy-to-use registration process;
- The ability to easily browse the training catalog, and filter training programs by topic, location, and dates;
- The ability to communicate training needs and topics of interest between training participants and providers;
- A community forum on training to discuss training and training needs with others (both participants and providers); and
- A personalized “My Page” space to save training program descriptions and other information for future reference.

The system provides participants with a single, timely source for training programs, a simplified process for planning and scheduling training, and the ability to contact providers about training offerings and additional information.

This system also benefits trainers by providing:

- An editable, easy-to-use system for posting training program descriptions,
- An ability to reach potential participants nationally and across industry groups,
- Simplified access to training program information and descriptions, and
- Site metrics related to information posted to the Web site by each provider.

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