

Environmental, Health & Safety News

Alcohol and Drugs - Not in the Workplace!

By Deborah Lines, Manager of Human Resources - Indiana

National Drug-Free Work Week 2008 is October 20-26. The purpose of Drug-Free Work Week is to highlight the fact that being drug free is key to protecting workplace safety and health and to encourage workers with alcohol and drug problems to seek help.

imi is committed to providing a safe, healthy and drug-free working environment and wants to take this opportunity to remind all employees about the importance of working drug free for your safety, your co-workers and the communities in which we live. All employees should have a copy of imi's Substance Abuse Policy. If you do not have a copy please contact human resources.

Some of the potential risks and hazards of workplace alcohol and drug use are obvious, particularly those related to safety. Alcohol and drug use can seriously impair judgment and coordination, which can lead to workplace accidents, injuries and even death. And a person does not need to be an alcoholic or drug addict to create safety hazards. For example, someone who still has alcohol in their bloodstream from drinking before they were on the clock may not be in any condition to work safely. But the problems extend beyond safety. Workplace alcohol and drug use can weaken our ability to operate profitably and productively. It is also associated with lower levels of employee morale—not only that of employees struggling with alcohol or drug problems, but also those who work alongside them.

Key to preventing these problems is for all employees to understand that there is help for those struggling with alcohol and drug problems. If you (or someone you know) need help, call 1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357) or visit www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov. Other sources of help are available at www.dol.gov/workingpartners.

We would also encourage you to speak to your direct supervisor if you have a concern about drug or alcohol use. If you have a problem, imi's Substance Abuse Policy allows any employee to come forward, without fear of discipline, so long as you do so BEFORE a problem is detected in a company-required drug or alcohol test.

Work place health and safety is our number one priority.

The US Department of Health and Human Services Administration's 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health reports that of 17.9 million illicit drug users age 18 and over identified, 13.4 million (@75%) were employed. Of US workers aged 18 to 64 diagnosed with a substance use disorder 62.7% were employed full-time.

According to a 1998 Bureau of Labor Statistics analysis of toxicology reports across a variety of occupations and industries, one in five workplace fatalities are estimated to have had a positive test for alcohol or drugs.

From the September 2008 proposed Mine Safety and Health Administration Policy on Drug and Alcohol Use: "Using alcohol and/or drugs can affect a persons coordination and judgment significantly at a time when he or she needs to be alert, aware, and capable of performing tasks where there is substantial risk of injury to oneself or others. Even prescription medications may affect a persons perception and reaction time."

Statistics from other national studies show that 47% of all serious workplace accidents and 40% of all fatalities have drug and/or alcohol involvement (*Occupational Medicine*). According to the National Council on Compensation Insurance, 38% of all workers' compensation claims are related to alcohol or drug abuse in the workplace.

As bad as all of this sounds, it is better today than it was 10 years ago. We have reduced the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol in the workplace because of the policies that have been put in place. But we cannot afford to back down. Most of us are involved in dangerous work, if it is only when we drive to and from work. Don't put your life and health at risk. Don't let someone else's problem become your problem. Keep our workplaces free from drugs and alcohol.



I somehow missed recognizing our Brazil, IN plant last month. They also won the NRMCA Excellence in Safety award. Great Job!!

Words of Wisdom:
"If you think you are too small to make a difference, you haven't been in bed with a mosquito."

--Anita Roddick

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We're Proud of Our Work

Safety is never an accident: it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution! It represents the wise choice of many alternatives!!

Location: _____

Supervisor: _____

please sign below as an indication that the material was read

October 2008

Key Safety Program Parameters

Safety starts at the top and senior management takes the lead in supporting and promoting our safety efforts, but in reality, everyone of us is a member of the safety committee and it is everyone's responsibility to take an active role in the safety program.

According to an article written by Gary Hanson, President of American Safety and Health Management Consultants, Inc., a successful safety program is an ongoing continuous effort that has a number of required steps. Some of the steps include:

- Involvement and recognition of all employees

If you have not been involved, start today to become more involved. Your ideas and recommendations are a vital component of imi's success. You are the expert in the area where you have been working. Your involvement will only improve the overall safety program.

Imi is interested in identifying, recognizing, and rewarding good safety records. Individuals and groups are being rewarded for meeting safety goals.

- Communication

Every effort is being made to promote our safety program on a continuous basis. Toolbox talks are becoming a weekly happening and a part of standard operating procedures. More and more safety performance is being communicated so that changes, updates and successes are shared. We are asking the consulting arm of OSHA to make inspections of plants so that we can be proactive rather than reactive.

- Training

All effective safety programs start with a good training program. Each year we are doing more and more training. In order for people to perform as expected, they have to be trained in what is expected. All employees must be trained in the safest way to perform their tasks and provided with the necessary tools.

- Evaluation and assessment

How are we doing? Every great safety program is reviewed regularly so that updates and improvements can be made as necessary. Changes in technology and equipment may require changes to policies. Never forget that Safety is an ongoing effort. If you have suggestions or questions, please let us know.

HAVE A SAFE OCTOBER!!

