

Alcohol And Drug Abuse

AR Training

DMME

Division of Mineral Mining

Updated 2012

The Facts And Figures

According to a national government survey:

- Most (roughly 75%) of the nation's approximately 16.4 million illicit drug users and approximately 15 million heavy alcohol users hold full time jobs.
- Highest rates of illicit drug use were among food service workers (17.4%), construction workers (15.1%) and arts, design, entertainment, sports and media employees (12.4%).
- Highest rates of heavy alcohol use were among construction, **mining**, excavation and **drilling** workers (17.8%), installation, maintenance and repair workers (14.7%), and food service workers (12.1%).

More Facts And Figures

- Drug and alcohol use are associated with higher levels of absenteeism and frequent job changes. Drug users are twice as likely to skip 1 or more days of work per month. They are far more likely to miss 2 or more days per month due to illness or injury than non-users. Among drug users, 12.3% reported working for 3 or more employers in the past year, as opposed to 5.1% among non-users.
- Of all workers in the survey, 42.9% reported working for employers who conduct pre-employment drug testing and 29.6% for employers conducting random testing.

Things To Consider

- The previous figures show drug testing programs, though helpful, are not enough.
- Everyone at a mine site has the responsibility to see that work is performed safely and in keeping with Division of Mineral Mining regulations.
- DMM regulation 4VAC25-40-250 states, in part; “Employees shall not use intoxicating beverages, narcotics or other substances that will impair their ability to perform their assigned task.”

More To Think About

- There is a direct correlation between substance abuse and accidents/fatalities in the workplace.
- Up to 40% of industrial fatalities and 47% of industrial injuries can be linked to alcohol use.
- Employees who use drugs are 3.6 times more likely to be involved in a workplace accident.

What Is Substance Abuse?

Using a substance to modify or control mood or state of mind in a manner that is illegal or harmful to oneself or others.

Addiction

The irresistible compulsion to use alcohol and other drugs, despite adverse consequences, to achieve a desired effect (high). It is viewed primarily as a mental condition although physical dependency may be associated with it. It is characterized by repeated failures to control use, increased tolerance and increased disruption in daily life.

Understanding Addiction

**For one in ten people, abuse leads to addiction.
Addiction to alcohol and other drugs is:**

- Chronic
- Progressive
- Primary
- Terminal
- Characterized by denial

Impact of Substance Abuse in the Workplace

- Employee health
- Productivity
- Decision making
- Safety
- Employee morale
- Security
- Organizational image and community relations

The Effects On Co-workers

The job performance and general attitude of the co-workers of drug and alcohol abusers can be negatively affected. Workers have reported being put in danger, having been injured, having to work harder, having to re-do work or to cover for someone as a result of the employee's drinking or other drug use.

Traps Co-workers May Fall Into

- Sympathy
- Innocence
- Excuses
- Apology
- Diversions
- Anger

Negative Coworker Impact

Enabling:

Action that someone takes to protect the person with the problem from the consequences of his or her actions.

- We may think we are helping the person by giving them time to deal with their problem in their own way. Unfortunately, enabling actually helps the person to NOT deal with his or her problem. OR, we may not realize we are enabling them.

Examples Of Enabling

- Covering Up
- Rationalizing
- Withdrawing/Avoiding
- Blaming

Signs and Symptoms of Substance Abuse

Abuse of alcohol and other drugs affect people:

- Emotionally
- Behaviorally
- Physically

Emotional Effects

- Extreme Mood Swings
- Aggression
- Burnout
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Paranoid or Delusional
- Denial

Behavioral Effects

- Frequent, prolonged and often unexplained absences.
- Involvement in accidents both on and off the job.
- Erratic work patterns and reduced productivity.
- Alcohol abusers may find it hard to hide a hangover.

Physical Effects

- Exhaustion or hyperactivity
- Dilated pupils and slurred speech
- Unsteady walk
- Bloodshot or glassy eyes and a persistent cough may indicate marijuana use.
- Cocaine and methamphetamine users may display increased energy.
- Alcoholics will show signs of general physical deterioration.

Drugs of Abuse

- Alcohol
- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Inhalants
- Stimulants
- Depressants
- Hallucinogens
- Narcotics
- Designer Drugs

❖ Prescription drugs, primarily pain killers, rank #2 behind marijuana as the most abused!!

Abuse of Prescription Drugs

- Deaths from prescription drug poisonings/overdoses have **tripled** in the last decade. In that same period, sales of pain killers have increased 600%.
- The highest percentages of these deaths have occurred in the age groups that make up the work force, 25 – 44 and 45 – 64.
- Prescription drug abuse now ranks second only to marijuana as the nation's largest illegal drug problem.
- According to the DEA, 30% of all drug abuse involves prescription drugs.

Physical Dependence

Usually associated with taking prescription pain killers or other “opioids” (stimulants and depressants) to avoid withdrawal symptoms such as nausea, sweating and chills as well as pain. It is often accompanied by a growing tolerance of the drug necessitating larger and larger doses. It is considered to be a different problem from addiction. As stated earlier, addiction is considered more of a mental problem than a physical one.

The Signs Are The Same As With Other Drug Abuse

- Higher than normal rate of absenteeism.
- Reduced productivity/quality of work.
- Higher accident rate on and off the job.
- Changes in personality, mood swings, etc.

A Major Problem

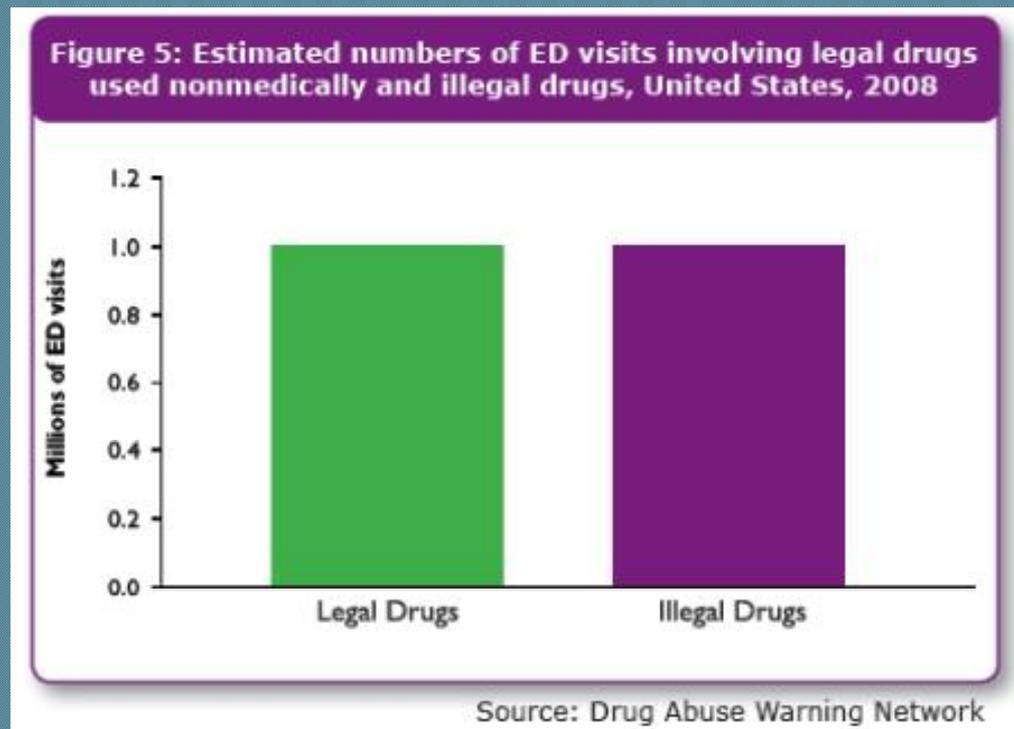
- Normal drug screening will not catch these drugs.
- It is not unusual for people to possess these drugs.
- Many people do not equate abusing prescription drugs with other drug abuse.
- Many believe if a doctor prescribes them, they must not be harmful, even if you take a few extra.
- Most people (80%) believe children are most at risk to die from prescription drug poisoning. In fact, adults account for 97% of all deaths.

What Is Causing These Deaths?

- Taking more than the prescribed amount.
 - Mixing with alcohol or other drugs.
 - Doctors over-prescribing.
- ❖ Between 2004 and 2008 hospital emergency room visits related to non-medical use of prescription drugs increased 111%.

Abuse of Legal Drugs Equals That of Illegal Drugs

- Emergency room visits involving non-medical use of legal drugs and use of illegal drugs were roughly equal in 2008 at 1 million each!
- By 2011, 70% involved the use of prescription drugs.



What Can We Do?

- An even greater responsibility rests with supervisors and co-workers to detect and expose potential problems.
- The use of any medication, over the counter or prescribed, that may affect a worker's ability to do their job must be reported to the certified foreman.(4VAC25-40-250)
- Everyone on the mine site must know that ANY form of drug abuse is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Remember, by taking action you may be saving the person's life as well as your own and that of others.

Alcohol In Energy Drinks

- A new issue to contend with.
- A Growing Concern Amongst Public Health and Safety Officials, Employers and Parents.

The Problem

- Public health and safety officials have become alarmed by the newest entry into the world of alcoholic beverages. Alcoholic energy drinks are prepackaged beverages that contain not only alcohol but also caffeine and other stimulants.
- Because of the packaging, they can be hard to distinguish from regular non-alcoholic energy drinks.

Why Is It So Dangerous?

- Since energy drinks are stimulants and alcohol is a depressant, the combination of effects can be dangerous.
- Fatigue is one of the ways the body normally tells someone that they've had enough alcohol to drink. Since these energy drinks also contain one or more stimulants (caffeine), the effects are masked, so you may not realize how much alcohol you have consumed.
- Alcohol and caffeine can be very dehydrating which can hinder your body's ability to metabolize the alcohol.
 - This could extend the toxicity and symptoms into the next day!
 - Dehydration when working in hot environments can also increase the risk of heat related illnesses.

Why Is It So Dangerous?

- The stimulant effect can make the person believe they aren't impaired. No matter how alert you feel, the alcohol in these drinks will raise your blood alcohol level just like having any other alcoholic drinks.
- Once the stimulant effect wears off, the depressant effects of the alcohol will remain. Serious alcohol induced sickness can occur such as vomiting while asleep or respiratory depression.

Alcoholic Energy Drinks Look Like Regular Energy Drinks!



- This line of alcoholic beverage products is extremely similar in look to the popular energy drinks that contain no alcohol.
- Clerks and retailers may not be able to differentiate between nonalcoholic and alcoholic beverages being sold.

Potentially A Serious Problem at Our Facilities

- If Clerks and Retailers are having trouble telling the difference between the two, it could be challenging for anyone.
- How do we know if a Contract Employee is drinking a regular energy drink on his lunch break as opposed to an alcoholic one?
- An alcoholic energy drink would be the perfect way to disguise what someone is drinking.
- This poses a threat to mine operations and the safety of workers.

Examine The Container

- If you are suspicious of someone drinking an energy drink containing alcohol onsite, check the container.
- Any alcoholic drinks are required to show the Alcohol Volume (ALC/VOL) on the can/bottle.
- In this case, Sparks Energy drinks contain 6.0% ALC/VOL.



Examine the Container



- People might think they can get away with having a few of these at work and can drive when they leave the job site because they look like a regular energy drink.
- No matter how alert a person may feel, their blood alcohol level will be the same as having several alcoholic drinks.

In Dealing With Any Substance Abuse, Don't....

- Don't "enable" – If you cover up for a substance abuser, lend them money or help conceal poor work performance, you are protecting them from the consequences of their actions and making it possible for them to continue using alcohol or drugs.
- Don't look the other way or try to intervene on your own. If you become aware of substance abuse, **DO** pass the word along to your supervisor or other appropriate management personnel.
- Don't worry about jeopardizing someone's job. Many people report that the threat of getting fired made them get help that they had previously refused. Many companies will put them back to work once they have received help. *Besides, you may be saving their life as well as protecting yourself and other co-workers!*