


IPRF ISSUES

Risk & Safety Tips from the ILLINOIS PUBLIC RISK FUND

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Working Drug-Free Works

U.S. Department of Labor

Working Partners
for an Alcohol- and Drug-Free Workplace

alliance
An OSHA Cooperative Program

www.dol.gov/workingpartners

Substance abuse places a major burden on all segments of American society, including the workplace. The vast majority of drug users—more than three-quarters—are employed, and when they arrive at work, they don't leave their problems outside the door. The good news, however, is that employers have enormous potential to protect their businesses from the negative impact of substance abuse by educating employees about its dangers and encouraging individuals with substance abuse problems to seek help.

Safety and Health

Substance abuse is one of the nation's largest health problems, afflicting individuals, families and communities across the U.S. Although many stereotypes

exist about alcoholics and drug addicts, in reality, substance abuse knows no boundaries, and people struggling with it come from all walks of life. Most are employed, and their behavior creates serious worksite safety concerns. Alcohol and drugs can impair a worker's judgment and coordination, leading to an increased risk of occupational accidents and injuries. And no business—regardless of industry, size or location—is immune to the hazards alcohol and drug abuse can cause.

The good news is that employers and employees can improve safety and health in their workplaces by working together to implement drug-free workplace programs that educate employees about the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse and encourage individuals with problems to seek help. Because these programs are natural complements to other initiatives that help ensure safe and healthy workplaces, DOL's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) both strongly support them, especially within workplace environments involving safety-sensitive duties. Drug-free workplace programs are not, however, currently required under OSHA or MSHA regulations.

Crisis Situations

Having a drug-free workplace program in place is a workplace's best line of defense against alcohol and drug problems. However, since careful planning and consideration is required, a program cannot be put in place overnight. In the meantime, extreme caution should be exercised in addressing existing problems. A section on crisis management reviews strategies for addressing immediate problems absent a drug-free workplace program.

Generally, a comprehensive drug-free workplace program includes five components:

1 Drug-Free Workplace Policy

A written drug-free workplace policy is the foundation of a drug-free workplace program. Every organization's policy should be unique and tailored to meet its specific needs; however, all effective policies have a few aspects in common, including:

Why the policy is being implemented. Rationale can be as simple as a company being committed to protecting the safety, health and well being of its employees and patrons and recognizing that abuse of alcohol and other drugs compromises this dedication.

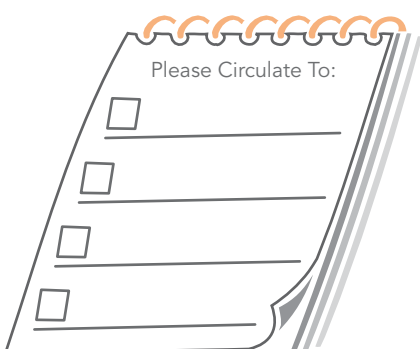
A clear description of prohibited behaviors. At a minimum, this should include the following statement: "The use, possession, transfer or sale of illegal drugs by employees is prohibited."

An explanation of the consequences for violating the policy. There may include discipline up to and including termination and/or referral for assistance. Consequences should be consistent with existing personnel policies and procedures and any applicable state laws.

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Drug-free workplace programs help improve workplace safety and health in organizations of all sizes and in all industries. They also play an important role in fostering safer and drug-free families, schools and communities across the U.S.

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5 MINUTE SAFETY TALKS

Extension Cord Safety

Extension cords are designed as conveniences, not hazards. Too often they're converted into hazards by the people who use them. Let's go over some of the ways these safety hazards are formed.

Extension cords are often placed in areas where people don't expect them to be and a tripping hazard results. Keep cords out of aisles and other places where pedestrians might trip over them. Eliminate the hazard by hanging the cord with ample clearance, or by placing a board on either side when left on the floor. Extension cords should never be used as permanent wiring.

When someone trips over a cord, the plug may be jerked, damaging it and making it an electrical hazard.

Many hazards can be eliminated to start with by selecting the right extension cord for the job. All cords should be UL listed, properly grounded, and meet other applicable electrical code specifications. The electrical equipment should also be properly grounded.

Appropriate cords should be used with portable electric tools or extension lamps to be used in boilers, tanks, and other grounded enclosures.

Cords should always be kept in excellent condition. Brass shell sockets should not be used. Handles of lamps should be made of non-conductive material, and there should be no metallic connection between the lamp guard and socket shell.

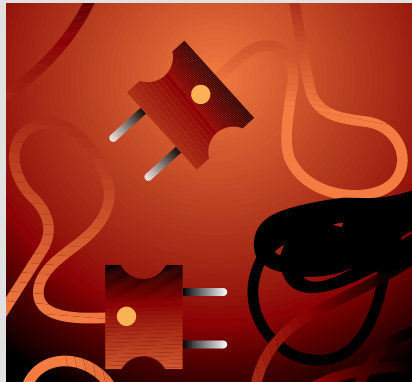
Plastic covers of some type are recommended for extension cords which are used around solvents or oils. Don't twist or kink cords, and protect them from sharp objects.

If moisture, heat or chemicals are present, be sure your cord is the proper type for use in these conditions.

Wet or sweaty hands form a dangerous connection when they come in contact with a good ground like a wet floor, a steam or water pipe, or another electrical connection.

It's important to inspect extension cords often and, if they're damaged, don't use them. Watch for overloading electrical circuits by adding too many extension cords to the circuit.

Try to remember what extension cords really are. They're a convenience designed for a specific purpose. Handle them with care and use them safely. They aren't the answer to every electrical need, but they're a lot of help when used correctly.



LEADER NOTES

OBJECTIVE:

To introduce the hazards associated with using electrical extension cords in the workplace.

POTENTIAL INJURIES:

Electrical shock, burns, or fatalities.

THE TALK – POINTS TO COVER

- Extension cords are designed to be conveniences, not hazards.
- Let's go over some of the ways to prevent some safety hazards.
 - Keep cords out of aisles and other places where pedestrians might trip over them.
 - Extension cords should never be used as permanent wiring.
- When someone trips over a cord, the plug may be jerked, damaging it and making it an electrical hazard.
- Start by selecting the right extension cord. It should be UL listed, properly grounded, and meet other applicable electrical code specifications.
- Appropriate cords should be used with portable electric tools or extension lamps to be used in boilers, tanks, and other grounded enclosures.
- Cords should always be kept in excellent condition.
- If moisture, heat or chemicals are present, be sure your cord is the proper type for use in these conditions.

Learn from Near-Accidents

When you're driving down the highway at a pretty good clip and another car pulls out in front of you, it's necessary to hit the brakes or make a quick move to avoid an accident. You'll probably be pretty hot over the other driver's actions. If you're smart you won't let anger overpower your safe driving habits. You'll remind yourself to slow down, be more alert, and watch cars in other lanes. Next time this could save your life.

Close calls or near-accidents on the job should be converted into safety precautions. A near-accident is an indication that something is wrong. It's a warning!

Let's review some typical accidents that could have been avoided if the close call warning had been heeded.

A shop employee stumbled over a two-by-four and fractured an ankle. A janitor tripped over a loose floor tile and fell against a metal guardrail. A secretary, after slipping on some trash and grabbing a metal file cabinet to break the fall, was injured when the heavy cabinet landed on her.

These accidents could have been prevented. Picking up the two-by-four and the trash on the floor would have prevented these accidents. No one paid any attention to the warnings in each of these cases, nothing was done, and the accidents were a result.

As the saying goes, we make our own luck. We have to act in a safe manner and take proper precautions. It's not hard to recall the accidents you've had. Unfortunately, a near-accident is often forgotten without any benefits resulting from the experience.

How can we turn a close call into a positive safety experience? First, we have to think safety and become concerned over near-accidents. Then correct the situation by removing the hazard that caused the near-accident. If you can't handle it, report it to your supervisor. All near accidents should be reported. There's at least one good lesson to be learned from every near-accident, and in many cases more than one lesson.

Safety awareness is always important. It's a case of preparing yourself mentally to act in a safe manner and to recognize a close call as a warning. When a stack of boxes tips over - or the handle on a tool snaps - or a ladder slips - you should get the message and then do something about it.



LEADER NOTES

OBJECTIVE:

To stress that little things can be corrected to prevent accidents. To reinforce the concept of reporting all near-accidents.

THE TALK – POINTS TO COVER

- Close calls or near-accidents on the job should be converted into safety precautions.
- A near-accident is an indication that something is wrong. It's a warning!
- There are some typical accidents that could have been avoided if the close call warning had been heeded.
 - A shop employee stumbled over a two by-four and fractured an ankle.
 - A janitor tripped over a loose floor tile and fell against a metal guardrail.
 - After slipping on some trash, and grabbing a metal file cabinet to break the fall, a secretary was injured when the heavy cabinet landed on her.
- These accidents could have been prevented.
- We have to act in a safe manner and take proper precautions.
- We have to think safety and become concerned with near-accidents.
- Correct the situation by removing the hazard that caused the near-accident.
- All near-accidents should be reported.

Protect Your Workplace If There's a Fire

Fire prevention in the workplace is as important as fire prevention at home. A fire can be traumatic or even fatal for employees if you don't have a plan.

Do you have a plan if fire strikes? Employers should train all employees in evacuation procedures; conduct regular fire drills; and include disabled employees in emergency planning.

Be Prepared For A Fire Emergency

- ✓ Read your building's evacuation plan.
- ✓ Count the doors or desks between your work area and the nearest exits.
- ✓ Know at least two ways out of your work area and participate in regular fire drills.
- ✓ Know where the fire alarms are located and learn how to use them.
- ✓ Post the fire department's number by your phone.
- ✓ If you have a physical disability, make sure your employer includes your special needs in evacuation plans.

If A Fire Strikes

- ✓ Sound the alarm – even for a small fire.
- ✓ Leave immediately and close doors behind you.
- ✓ If you encounter smoke, try another escape route.
- ✓ If you have to escape through smoke, crawl on your hands and knees keeping your head one to

two feet (30 to 60 centimeters) above the floor, where the air will be cleanest.

- ✓ Test the doorknob and spaces around the door with the back of your hand. If the door is warm, try another escape route. If it's cool, open it slowly. Close it quickly if smoke pours through.
- ✓ Always use stairs – never use elevators, unless directed by the fire department.
- ✓ Once you're out, tell the fire department if anyone is trapped in the building. Do not go back inside.
- ✓ Never ignore a fire alarm

High-rise Evacuation

- ✓ If you work in a high-rise building, you may be asked to stay inside, away from the fire, and wait to be rescued. You may be asked to go to a central safe area.
- ✓ Learn your building's fire emergency plan and follow it unless doing so puts you in danger.
- ✓ Follow instructions sometimes given over your building's public-address system.
- ✓ If there is no fire in your area, go to your building's safe area or close all fire doors and stay put.
- ✓ If there is fire or smoke in your area, go to a lower floor and wait, or leave the building. Use the stairs.
- ✓ If you have a portable phone, keep it with you. Call the fire department if you are trapped.



Help Prevent Fires

- ✓ Don't stack papers on top of computer monitors, and give heat-producing equipment room to breathe.
- ✓ Don't pinch extension cords under furniture, and don't plug extension cords into each other.
- ✓ Report and replace frayed electrical cords.
- ✓ Unplug coffee makers and other appliances when you leave.
- ✓ Smoke only in designated areas, and use ashtrays.
- ✓ Keep stairways and exits clear of trash, cleaning supplies, and other combustibles.
- ✓ Report blocked exits as well as problems with alarms, sprinklers, and emergency lighting.
- ✓ Provide adequate lighting and security from intruders and encourage employees to report any suspicious activities.

www.sparky.org & www.nfpa.org

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Working Drug-Free Works

... continued from cover

Sharing all policies with all employees is essential for success; therefore, employers should be certain that all employees are aware of the policy and drug-free workplace program. The following resources may help employers develop effective drug-free workplace policies:

- Drug-Free Workplace Advisor Program Builder—Policy Development
- Substance Abuse Information Database (SAID)/Writing Substance Abuse Policies

2 Supervisor Training

After developing a drug-free workplace policy, an organization should train those individuals closest to its workforce—supervisors. Training should ensure that supervisors understand:

- The drug-free workplace policy
- Ways to recognize and deal with employees who have performance problems that may be related to alcohol and other drugs
- How to refer employees to available assistance

In relation to a drug-free workplace program, supervisors' responsibilities should include monitoring employees' performance, staying alert to and documenting performance problems, and enforcing the policy. Supervisors should not, however be expected to diagnose alcohol- and drug-related problems or provide counseling to employees who may have them.

Note: If supervisors are responsible for making referrals for drug testing based on reasonable suspicion, they also must be trained on how to make that determination.

3 Employee Education

A drug and alcohol education program provides employees with the information they need to fully understand, cooperate with and benefit from their company's drug-free workplace program.

Effective employee education programs provide company-specific information, such as the details of the drug-free workplace policy, as well as generalized information about the nature of alcohol and drug addiction; its impact on work performance, health and personal life; and types of help available for individuals with related problems.

All employees should participate, and the message should be ongoing basis through a variety of means. Forums for employee education may include home mailings, workplace displays, brown-bag lunches, guest speakers, seminars and sessions at new employee orientation.

4 Employee Assistance

A critical component of a drug-free workplace program is providing assistance or support to employees who have problems with alcohol and other drugs.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) are generally the most effective vehicle for addressing poor workplace performance that may stem from an employee's personal problems, including the abuse of alcohol or other drugs. EAPs are an excellent benefit to employees and their families and clearly demonstrate employers' respect for their staff. They also offer an alternative to dismissal and minimize an employer's legal vulnerability by demonstrating efforts to support employees. In addition to counseling and referrals, many EAPs offer other related services, such as supervisor training and employee education.

At a minimum, businesses should maintain a resource file from which employees can access information about community-based resources, treatment programs and helplines.

5 Drug Testing

Some employers decide to drug test employees for a variety of reasons, such as deterring and detecting drug use, as well as providing concrete evidence for intervention, referral to treatment and/or disciplinary action. Before deciding to conduct testing, employers should consider a few factors, including:

Who will be tested? Options may include all staff, job applicants and/or employees in safety-sensitive positions.

When will tests be conducted? Possibilities including pre-employment, upon reasonable suspicion or for cause, post-accident, randomly, periodically and post-rehabilitation.

Which drugs will be tested for? Options including testing applicants and employees for illegal drugs and testing employees for a broader range of substance, including alcohol and certain prescription drugs.

How will tests be conducted? Different testing modes are available, and many states have laws that dictate which may and may not be used.

Employers also must be familiar with any local, state and Federal laws or any collective bargaining agreements that may impact when, where and how testing is performed. It is strongly recommended that legal counsel be sought before starting any testing program.

Although programs can be effective without all five of these components, it is recommended that all be at least explored when developing a program. Effective program planning and philosophy are critical to success. Employers and employees should work together to examine each component and design a balanced, fair program suited to the unique needs and challenges of their workplaces. To help them do so, the links above provide more extensive information about each component. Also, several promising practices provide examples of effective drug-free workplace programs in action.

2007 SUPERVISOR TRAINING



IPRF is offering a series of seminars to assist its members in controlling losses due to accidents. This three part program is designed to provide each participant with the tools to build and support an effective safety and health program.

Supervisors responsible for the safety and health of their employees should attend. They will benefit through a combination of lectures, workshops, and case studies. Each participant will "hit the ground running" with "real world" solutions to assist in effective accident prevention and in the reduction of workers compensation costs.

Seminar registration fees are covered by the IPRF. To register, contact Bonnie MacIntosh, the Training Registrar at 1-847-726-4095.

Tinley Park, IL	Level II – November 7	Level III – (TBD)
Fairview Heights, IL	Level II – November 14	Level III – (TBD)
Springfield, IL	Level II – November 15	Level III – (TBD)

AVERAGE & MAXIMUM WEEKLY Disability Benefits



The maximum TTD benefit can be no more than 133-1/3% of the statewide average weekly wage on the date of the injury or last exposure.

	STATE AVERAGE WEEKLY	MAXIMUM TTD BENEFIT
January 15, 2006 to July 14, 2006	\$822.20	\$1,096.2
July 15, 2006 to January 14, 2007	\$840.65	\$1,120.87
January 15, 2007 to July 14, 2007	\$861.38	\$1,148.51
July 15, 2007 to January 14, 2008	\$873.28	\$1,164.37

MEET YOUR Claims Service Representative

May SooHoo has been with IPRF as a Claims Service Representative for almost two years. She was in the banking business for 25 years before that. May feels very comfortable on the job and is grateful for all the support of her fellow workers. May says the adjusters continuously educate her in claim functions and that work is never boring. Her goal is to one day be an adjuster or medical only adjuster. May moved to the suburbs from the Bridgeport area about 4 years ago and says she still misses the "city" but is adjusting to suburban life. In her spare time, May enjoys traveling with her husband, spending time with their 14 nieces and nephews, trying new recipes and baking.



Need More Newsletters?

If you would like IPRF Issues newsletter mailed to additional department heads, please contact:

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Lost Time Claims - By Area Code of Member

NAME	MEMBERS	EXT. #	FAX
<i>Analyst:</i>			
Sharon Barnes	815 (Lb-Z members) 630 (F-Z members) 309 (A-Z members)	12233	440-914-2554
Susan Feigl	618 (A-L members) 217 (J-Z members)	12133	440-914-2562
Daniel Duffy	618 (M-Z members) 217 (A-I members)	12225	440-914-2786
Glenn Macey	815 (A-La members) 630 (A-E members) Livingston County	12234	440-914-2549
<i>Medical Only:</i>			
Mari Curless	Feigl/Duffy	12132	440-914-2509
Shari Heitman	Macey/Barnes	12238	440-914-2896
<i>Claim Service Rep.</i>			
Cheryl Foisy	Macey/Barnes Feigl/Duffy	12134	
<i>Supervisor:</i>			
Kim Vaughan		12226	440-914-2511
<i>Analyst:</i>			
Christine Dapper	847 (A-F members) 708 (N-R members) Duda Files	13635	440-914-2512
Sue LeBlanc	708 (A-M members) 708 (S-Z members) 847 (G-Z members)	12229	440-914-2541
Barbara Keller	SUBROGATION	12231	440-914-2523
Elaine Serafino	Cancelled members	12228	440-914-2532
<i>Medical Only:</i>			
Nancy Radzienta	Dapper/LeBlanc	12138	440-914-2510
<i>Claim Service Rep.</i>			
May SooHoo	Dapper/LeBlanc Serafino/Keller	13639	

Other Important Numbers

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IPRF Issues

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