



## **Substance Abuse**

Because the nature of construction work involves more potential hazards than most other occupations, substance abuse on the jobsite takes what is already a risky situation and makes it downright dangerous. You need a high level of training, skill, concentration, and safety awareness to do your job safely. There is no room for unsafe behavior. Your life, and often the lives of your co-workers, can be tragically affected if you use alcohol, drugs, or even prescription drugs on the jobsite.

More than 65 percent of all workplace injuries are related to on-the-job drug or alcohol use. According to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 15% of construction workers—or about 1 out of every 7 —have used illicit drugs in the last 30 days. The construction industry has the second highest percentage of illicit drug users.

Substance abuse increases the number of accidents on the job since the use of alcohol and other drugs reduces a person's normal reaction time. As long as the drug remains in the bloodstream, the person is impaired, even if the person does not engage in drug use on the job. Users of alcohol and drugs often ignore good health habits. Ingesting, inhaling, or injecting drugs increases disease, illness, and death. When one's whole existence is centered on alcohol or drugs, this dependence takes away personal freedom. In many real ways, the chemicals are in control.

Some people come by their substance abuse honestly. If you're in chronic pain, you are more likely to become addicted to pain killers, for example. But no matter where your dependency came from, if you have a substance abuse problem, there is help. Reach out to a friend. Talk to a co-worker. Have a heart-to-heart discussion with your family, your physician, someone at church, or pick up the phone and call for help. Many services are available, often at little or no cost. Find out whether your employer offers help through an Employee Assistance Program.

To find more resources, information, or guidance, contact your doctor or the nearest drug treatment center or mental health facility. You can search for them in the Yellow Pages or on the internet. There are also several national assistance groups that can help including: Alcoholics Anonymous, Partnership for a Drug-Free America, Al-Anon Family Group, Narcotics Anonymous, and the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Statistics show that substance abusers are likely to be involved in acts of domestic violence and often commit crimes to support their drug habits. If you need help, get it. Don't throw the rest of your life away for a temporary high.

**SAFETY REMINDER**



Whether it is beer, prescription drugs, weed, or anything else, drugs and alcohol put everyone on the jobsite in danger. Get help before you kill someone.