

# DRINKING AND DRUGS: NOT ON THE JOB

## SAFETY TOOL BOX TALK

All of us know that certain drugs are illegal, and that drinking or drug use can lead to both physical and mental impairment, and also that state and federal laws prohibit or regulate the use of drugs and alcohol. Catchy phrases such as 'Drinking and driving don't mix', 'Just say no to drugs', 'MADD, Mothers against drunk driving' and 'D.A.R.E. to keep kids away from drugs' serve as reminders and warnings of the dangers associated with drug abuse and the use of alcohol. We also need to be concerned about those who use these substances on the job.

The nature of our work demands total concentration on what we are doing. One slip could cause a serious injury or even death - and the victim could be you or a co-worker. Certainly the jobsite is no place for anyone using drugs or alcohol. Construction activities require employee alertness - to constant changes on the site and the ability to follow safe work practices to prevent accidents.

Experts suggest that 14% of workers use some type of substance on the job, and that 50% of those users try to sell drugs to other employees. Drug and alcohol users are more prone to have accidents, reduced productivity, increased tardiness and absenteeism, and poor quality work. It is up to you to avoid becoming a statistic, and to make your workplace safe and productive.

If you suspect that a co-worker is abusing alcohol and/or drugs, don't help them continue their habit, speak to your supervisor. Covering up a problem can lead to a potential incident and innocent workers could be hurt due to the impaired actions of a person who is a drug user or one who has a drinking problem. Many companies now offer an 'Employee Assistance Program' designed to help their employees 'kick the habit' - or your supervisor may refer them to programs in the community where they can get help and counseling.

If you are a drug user, GET HELP! If you abuse alcohol on or off the job, GET HELP!

