

Employer Tip Sheet #11

Avoiding Problems With Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Making Prevention Work

Actions for Employers

- Announce that prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) problems is a major corporate focus and that you expect everyone to take part in this collective effort.
- Be aware of the potential risks that ATOD pose for any business or organization: increased absenteeism, tardiness, and use of sick leave and health services; higher insurance and Workers' Compensation costs; more injuries, fatalities, and thefts; lower productivity and product quality; and reduced employee morale and higher turnover.
- Be aware of the connection between alcohol and other drugs and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Using alcohol and other drugs can lead to unplanned and unprotected sex. Many drugs, including alcohol and tobacco products, also interfere with the body's immune system.
- Fully explain the benefits and procedures of your drug-free workplace program or policy to all employees.
- Host alcohol-free events, emphasizing the company commitment to preventing injury or death associated with drinking and driving, especially around the holidays.
- Provide food and beverages in company settings that encourage a healthy lifestyle.
- Be a positive role model consistent with your messages to your employees. Do not engage in any illegal, unhealthy, or dangerous ATOD use.
- Sponsor or help with prevention services in your community that would benefit your employees and their families.
- Include prevention/healthy lifestyle articles in your company materials.
- Consider formulating a corporate performance standard that encourages community involvement to prevent ATOD problems as part of an ongoing commitment to making the community a better place in which to live and do business.
- Appoint a corporate representative to serve on and support any ATOD prevention-oriented programs or community partnerships in your area.
- Take a comprehensive approach to prevention efforts. Serve as a leader, supporter, or active participant in other community-based efforts to prevent ATOD use by youth.
- Encourage and support employees and their family members to ask for help for an alcohol, tobacco, or other drug problem. Treatment is more cost-effective than incurring potential safety problems and lost productivity due to drug-related problems.