

WorkSafe: Your industry expert

WorkSafe, Inc. offers a full spectrum of workplace drug and alcohol program services at its office on 36th and C Street in Anchorage and instant-results testing for your worksite. WorkSafe provides corporate training, drug and alcohol testing consultation services, pre-employment drug and alcohol screening, return-to-duty services and follow-up testing. It also has on-call personnel 24 hours a day if an employer's work shifts require testing availability around the clock. For more information regarding a drug-free workplace, contact WorkSafe at 907-563-8378.

WorkSafe Products & Services
Drug & alcohol awareness training
Collector's desk reference guide®
Training videos
Program manager's reference guide®
Breath alcohol technician (BAT) training
Collection personnel training course®
Compliance toolbox CD

WorkSafe Contacts

To contact WorkSafe during regular office hours, call 563-8378(TEST).

To request an after hours drug or alcohol test, call 888-227-8642.

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President's Message: Let's welcome fall

By Matthew Fagnani, C-SAPA, C-SI
President, WorkSafe - Providing Drug-Free Workplace

It is hard to say goodbye to a great summer but we cannot stop time and every year we must let summer go in order to welcome fall. This summer also had us saying goodbye to Steve Mihalik who accepted a job in Minnesota with a national company as Vice President of Substance Abuse. All of us here wish him and his wife, Darla, the very best.

At WorkSafe, change always provides an opportunity to re-evaluate the overall organization and work-flow for efficiencies. As a result of change, I am happy to congratulate WorkSafe's new Compliance Manager, Al Stoddard, C-SAPA. In this role, Al will be available to assist WorkSafe clients and staff in the interpretation of federal regulations and state drug testing laws. We also welcome Dana Blair who comes to WorkSafe with a 5-year background in Human Resources. Dana's role as program manager will be assisting clients with random program management and client set-up. We are excited to have

Dana, who brings us a fresh perspective from the human resource side of the business.

As fall approaches, WorkSafe staff will continue to work hard assuring that all of the end-of-the-year random programs are meeting the targeted year-end percentage goals. This year, our program staff noticed a pattern developing. Companies are not updating their employee lists with new hire and termination information, or they wait to update the list until after a random test group has already be selected.

Random programs lose their effectiveness if employee rosters are not current. Employers who do not keep the random lists up-to-date limit the chance of selecting current employees by diluting the random pool with terminated employees. The only way to have a successful random program is to keep your employee lists current.

U.S. Coast Guard publishes drug testing guide for employers

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) published "What Marine Employers Need to Know About Drug Testing" this month. Many employers may find particularly helpful the section on what to look for in hiring a service agent.

Available at <http://www.dot.gov/ost/dapc/documents.html>
To order a copy, call Drug & Alcohol Program Manager Bob Schoening at the USCG, 202.267.0684 or email rschoening@comdt.uscg.mil.



Good record keeping is important

Look out for DOT audits. DOT contacted many Alaska companies this summer ready to conduct compliance audits of their drug testing program. Be prepared! Do not wait for the DOT to announce an audit before making sure your records are current. Record keeping is an employer's responsibility. Auditors do contact WorkSafe to verify the information provided by employers.

Employers must keep secure and confidential recordkeeping systems with limited access from personnel not working directly with the program. Drug testing records need the same sense of security as medical and personnel records.

Some DOT agencies are now requiring that companies have, at a minimum, a scope-of-services on record that is an agreement between the employer and WorkSafe. For our seasonal employers, we will provide that upon re-activation of your program next season.

Required records to keep:

- Policy
- Scope-of-work for your TPA
- Pre-employment testing results for all current employees
- Random lists generated
- Employee results for random testing
- Post-accident results and documentation
- Reasonable cause checklist and test results
- Documentation of supervisor training in signs and symptoms
- Statistical test provide by WorkSafe
- Custody and Control forms

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The Official Newsletter of WorkSafe, Inc.



Stressed out? Learn ways to identify stress and helpful techniques to relax!

Joe Mathis, CEO, American Red Cross of Alaska

Every one of us experiences stress as we work, travel and spend time with family and friends. Stress is not always unpleasant or harmful and the amount of stress varies from person to person. But according to the American Psychological Association (APA), 43 percent of all adults suffer adverse health effects from stress. The APA also estimates that job stress costs American business and industry \$300 billion annually due to absenteeism, lower productivity and worker's compensation benefits.

Chronic, intense and ongoing stress affects your ability to function at work, may create problems at home and can lead to disease and other related condition, such as high blood pressure, headaches, fatigue and anxiety.

What is stress? Stress is a person's physical, mental or behavioral reaction to a "stressor" or situation. Starting a new job, being assigned to a new project or team, speaking to a large group or meeting tight deadlines are common causes of work-related stress. Personal stressors may include death or loss of a loved one, financial problems, buying a home or going through a divorce or separation.



Relax and get a massage

Everyone reacts differently to stress but common symptoms include headache, rapid breathing, upset stomach, anger, anxiety or depression.

Learn how to manage your stress! Take an active role in managing your stress. Find a balance between work and family



Laugh and embrace humor...

and accept the support of friends and co-workers. Develop strategies for dealing with change and maintain a positive attitude when confronted with stressful conditions at work and at home. Remember, how effectively you deal with stress in your workplace influences the amount of stress in your daily and personal life. If you are experiencing any, or a combination of stress signals over time, you may want to consult with your personal physician or employee assistance program professional.

The American Red Cross of Alaska offers the following tips on how to manage stress:

- Learn and use relaxation exercises such as deep breathing and muscle relaxation.
- Laugh and embrace humor when appropriate.
- Exercise regularly.
- Make a list of tasks you need to do and prioritize them.
- Maintain a balanced diet including all food groups.
- Avoid drugs and alcohol.
- Get a massage.
- Maintain normal sleep habits.
- Spend more time with and seek support from family and friends.

Katrina's impact on the nation

When a natural disaster like hurricane Katrina occurs, the entire nation feels stressed. That kind of stress puts us all at risk and the American Red Cross of Alaska understands that the volunteers, friends and family members of those impacted, as well as the emergency personnel working to help, will all feel unbelievable amounts of stress.



Alaska has been very generous in supporting the National Disaster Fund for Katrina. However, it is very important that we remember to help here at home for all the smaller disasters that affect our families, friends and neighbors here in the state.

Encourage your employees to manage stress!

Each month, the American Red Cross of Alaska holds a Brown Bag Lunch that discusses safety in the workplace. Join us on September 26 as we look at how to manage stress at home and in the workplace. To learn more, call the Red Cross at 646-5405.

Good record keeping... continues from page 1
This list is not a complete list of records but a good rule of thumb is to keep all test results, statistics, training records and all correspondence.

Seasonal companies:

If you are a seasonal company and you are approaching the end of your season remember to notify WorkSafe to deactivate your account.

ODAPC dispatches

The two hour rule: fact or urban legend?

Many safety-sensitive employees believe that once they are notified of their selection for DOT random testing that they have at least two hours before being required to complete the test.

Not true! Once an employee is notified, they must proceed immediately to the collection site. Immediately means that after notification, all the safety-sensitive employee's actions must lead to an immediate specimen collection.

Why? For the integrity of the test results.

But how do employers ensure this? A best practice for many companies is to develop random testing procedures or policies that clearly state what activities are acceptable after notification. That way there is no misunderstanding among employees. For example, if an employee is notified of a random test while working "off site" or "on the road," the company's policies should spell out exactly what the employee is to do before resuming safety-sensitive functions.

Custody & control form errors may lead to violations for employers

The problem: C/TPAs using their own identifying information on custody control forms (CCFs) do not always fill out the employer-specific information specified by DOT regulations. This opens employers up to violations for non-compliance.

The fix: Always make sure the form contains the employer's vitals: name, telephone number and fax number.

The problem: Employers and C/TPAs changing laboratories and medical review officers (MROs) sometimes use old CCFs with the wrong information. Urine specimens are sent to the wrong laboratories and laboratory results are sent to the wrong MROs.

The fix: Immediately update those changes to prevent testing and reporting delays and cancelled drug test results.

Alternate opiates



Synthetic opiates are a growing problem in the work place. It is important to test for these less traditional forms of drug use. Synthetic opiates are often prescribed to patients for pain relief by a physician and have a high abuse potential. Oxycodone is one of the most common misused opiates. Brand name drugs with oxycodone include OxyContin, Percocet, Percodan and Tylox. Hydromorphone is another common pain reliever and is found in drugs such as Dilaudid.

Companies currently test for alternate opiates, including drugs such as hydromorphone and oxycodone. The standard opiate test panel now tests for heroin, morphine and codeine.

Opiates have a high tolerance of physical and psychological dependence. Hydromorphone is usually detected 1 to 2 days after use and oxycodone 8 to 24 hours following use.

Possible physical effects of synthetic opiate use include euphoria, drowsiness, respiratory depression, nausea and constricted pupils.

OxyContin abusers either crush the tablet and ingest or snort it, or dilute it in water and inject it. Crushing or diluting the

tablet disarms the time-release action of the medication and causes a quick, powerful high. Abusers have compared this feeling to the euphoria they experience when taking heroin. In some areas, the use of heroin is overshadowed by the abuse of OxyContin.

Oxycodone abusers simply chew the tablet, breaking the wax-matrix, so all of

Companies now test for alternate opiates, including drugs such as hydromorphone and oxycodone.

the oxycodone is released at once. For a 40 mg tablet, that means a dosage equivalent of two and a half Percocets every four hours. The indicated dosage for most individuals is 1 to 2 Percocet tablets at a time. Taking four times the recommended dose can lead to fatal respiratory depression, although the typical adult would likely experience nausea and a period of immobility.

Of even greater interest to addicts and abusers is the possibility of nasal administration of the drug, which leads to an onset of peak effect in 25 minutes, compared to 60 to 90 minutes from oral administration.

PHMSA announces acting drug and alcohol program manager

DOT's Pipeline & Hazardous Material Safety Administration (PHMSA) announced that Stanley Kastanas will be the acting drug and alcohol program manager. ODAPC wishes outgoing manager Sheila Wright all the best in her new endeavors. To contact Kastanas, phone 202.366.3844 or email stanley.kastanas@dot.gov.

