



American Drug Testing

Drug-Free Workplace Programs

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DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE ADVISOR

AN ONGOING SERIES TO PROTECT YOUR COMPANY BY HELPING TO KEEP DRUGS OUT OF YOUR WORK-

Drug Use Rises in Fatal Accidents

A report by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows that there has been an increasing presence of drugs in fatal accidents since 2005. The report, looked at data involving 21,798 drivers killed in NYS auto accidents in 2009, 63 percent of whom (13,801) were tested for drugs after their deaths. The report found 3,952 testing positive for "drug involvement," or 18 percent of the total drivers.

The administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, David L. Strickland, left, and the director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Gil Kerlikowske.

The report by the safety agency was the first analysis of drug involvement among fatal crash victims, using data from the states provided through the Fatality Analysis Reporting System, and it examined drug testing information going back five years. The rise of drug use in traffic fatalities has been fairly steady, the report showed: It was 13 percent in 2005, 15 per-

cent in 2006, 16 percent in 2007 and 18 percent in 2008. The report doesn't provide all the answers. There's no data on which legal or illegal drugs were present or whether and how they might have affected the drivers.

"Drug presence has clearly risen since 2005..."

But in an interview, David L. Strickland, administrator of the National Highway Traffic

of law." He added, "Should we aim at developing scientific and legal levels of impairment, so we can prove that impact beyond a legal doubt? Absolutely we should."

Mr. Strickland pointed to 17 consecutive quarters of fatality and injury reduction on the highways. Some 34,000 people died on the roads in 2009, a lower level that Mr. Strickland associated with safer cars, safer roads, a successful program fighting distracted driving and a growing sense among the impaired that they should "find another way home."

In 2009, the safety agency issued the National Roadside Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use by Drivers, which contained data from random stops of drivers in 300 locations around the country in 2007.



The administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, David L. Strickland, left, and the director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Gil Kerlikowske.

Safety Administration, said, "Drug presence has clearly risen since 2005, and it's an easy extrapolation to say that some of that drug use may have impacted driving. But we can't say people were impaired with scientific certainty that could stand up in a court

Drug and alcohol tests were administered, and they revealed that alcohol was the most likely intoxicant, but among night stops 8.6 percent of the total tested had used marijuana, 3.9 percent had used cocaine and 1.3 percent tested positive for metham-

phetamine. Source: National Highway Traffic Safety For additional tips, see the "client area" at www.AmericanDrugTesting.net or call 843-747-4111.

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