

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 WORKPLACE.

Methamphetamine: Nightmare in the Workplace, Part II

Other physical and emotional/behavioral signs and symptoms of possible methamphetamine use include a decrease in or lack of appetite, unexplained weight loss, insomnia, dilated

pupils, hand tremors, dry mouth, excessive talking, delusions of grandeur and hallucinations.



Impact/Costs to the Workplace:

The most obvious cost to the workplace of an employee using methamphetamine is absenteeism, increased illness rates and accidents and lost productivity. Another less tangible cost includes low employee morale. In actual dollar figures, research has determined that meth-addicted employees cost each business just under \$47,500 per year. And, as with any substance problem, there is typically a rise in healthcare and workers' compensation claims. Methamphetamine by nature has the potential to in-

crease workplace violence. Workplace violence may be verbal or physical, but it is more likely to be physical with a methamphetamine user. Another form of violence in the workplace is identity theft.

“meth-addicted employees cost each business just under \$47,500 per year.”

It appears that many methamphetamine users are quite skilled at stealing a person's identity as a means of supporting their substance habit. Methamphetamine acts on the part of the brain that causes a person to do something over and over. With added energy, the ability to focus and an inability to sleep while high on meth, the meth addict has a great deal of time to sit in front of a computer for hours at a time. According to a survey by the Identity Theft Resource Center, 14% of victims who responded to the survey said the impostor was an employee of a business that had their information. Further, the cost of identity theft to a business for 2004 was over \$49,000. Drug use at the workplace is always a possibility, and with drug use, there is often drug trafficking. Drug trafficking

can take place at the worksite, in stair wells, in the parking lot and in break rooms. Be aware of the surroundings and be familiar with policies concerning illegal activities at the workplace.

Community Meth Problems Influence Workplaces:

There are a number of ways meth can negatively affect communities. Because meth can be easily manufactured in homes using readily available products, its manufacture creates significant problems and hazards including explosions, toxic waste, and child neglect and abuse. Children living in homes with meth labs are exposed to toxic waste and are typically neglected if not abused by meth-using parents and caretakers. There is an increase in HIV/AIDS associated with meth use as the substance decreases a user's inhibitions. Further, the materials used to produce the drug are toxic and often flammable, and any mistakes can result in an explosion or injury to not just the meth cook, but to their families, resulting in an increase in hospital visits related to chemical burns. Methamphetamine in the community means an increase in crime in such areas as burglaries, theft (especially identity theft), physical and/or domestic violence and even murder. Employers may want to find out whether their community has been affected by meth, because if it has, it is likely that meth may be in the workplace too – either directly with an em-

ployee or by means of an employee's relative or friend. For additional tips, see the “client area” at

Online Supervisor Training Program



Supervisors will learn:

- How to identify illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia
- The linkage between drug and alcohol problems and performance problems
- How to identify and investigate crisis situations
- How to recognize workplace problems related to employee use of alcohol and drugs
- How to avoid enabling and common supervisor traps



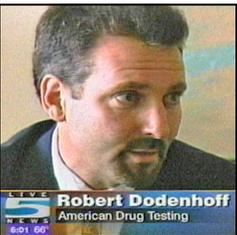
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The Drug-Free Workplace Advisor

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Robert Dodenhoff, President

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