



# H S E

HEALTH SAFETY ENVIRONMENTAL



**Alert #:** SA 9-24

**Date:** March 15, 2024

## **Drinking Affects Fitness for Duty**

Drinking alcohol as a regular pattern can negatively affect your performance at work, in the gym, when you play sports, and in everyday life. Alcohol is a sedative that slows down functioning. It weakens hand-eye coordination, impairs judgement, and slows down reaction time. When you are active, no matter what you are doing, all of these functions are imperative to keep up the pace and efficiently be aware of your surroundings.

Common sense, anecdotal evidence, and economic research all suggest that alcohol consumption has the potential to impose costs on employers, employees, and society in general by lowering the labor market performance of those who excessively use or abuse this substance. In addition to being potentially addictive, alcohol can affect cognitive processes, the ability to evaluate costs and benefits, and physical coordination. Current and/or past alcohol misuse can limit workers' abilities to perform their jobs through physical impairments.

By no means, do we want employees to abstain from drinking alcohol if they choose to do so...on their time off. However, when drinking alcohol on your time off affects your ability to comply with policy or perform your job to the best of your ability, concerns do arise.

There has been a recent trend in the wrong direction of employees showing up to work or crew change under the effects of alcohol. Reasonable suspicion requests and random checks have shown employees are showing up with a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) above allowable limits. Our family of business units along with just about every client we have, employs a zero tolerance policy regarding employees being under the influence while at work. What this means is if you test above allowable limits, you will be dismissed from the worksite...and in many cases...not be allowed back.

Let's bring it back to the basics. It typically takes the body one hour to process a 5oz. glass of wine, a beer or a shot of alcohol (1.25oz.). The more you consume, the longer it takes for your body to process these substances out. Therefore if you have a responsibility to be at work or make a crew change the next day, keep this in mind if you "have a few". Do not drink all day and into the night and assume that just because you haven't had a drink in 6-8 hours, your body has processed all of the alcohol out. It is your responsibility to understand this and make good decisions.

As part of our Substance Abuse programs (DOT and Non-DOT), employees showing up to work under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol are subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination. We never want it to come to this, however we have a duty to all employees to keep them safe.

If you need assistance, please contact the HR department for a referral to our Employee Assistance Program.

For further information regarding this Safety Alert, please contact the Corporate HSE Department.

***Report all incidents immediately to the Hotline 1-855-543-5163.***

**SAFETY ALERT**