

# News Release



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## **Mining community urged to participate in Drug-Free Work Week**

**ARLINGTON, Va.** – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is encouraging all mine operators and miners to take part in this year’s National Drug-Free Work Week, which takes place October 14 through 20.

“The purpose of this campaign is to focus employers,’ employees’ and the general public’s attention on the importance of being drug-free,” said Richard E. Stickler, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. “Mixing drugs or alcohol with mining is a recipe for disaster, and we encourage workers with substance abuse problems to seek the necessary help.”

Now in its second year, the annual campaign is a collaborative effort between the Labor Department and members of its Drug-Free Workplace Alliance; however, all employers and employees are encouraged to participate.

Throughout Drug-Free Work Week, the department and alliance members will conduct various activities to help employers, supervisors and workers understand how to implement effective drug-free workplace programs that focus on detection and deterrence, while also offering assistance and support for workers who may themselves have problems with alcohol or drugs.

A recent survey conducted by the Hazelden Foundation — a national nonprofit organization that helps people reclaim their lives from the disease of addiction — found that while most human resources practitioners recognize substance abuse and addiction as among the most serious problems facing workers, few companies actively address these issues with their employees.

No business is immune to the problems that drug and alcohol abuse can cause. Most adults who abuse drugs or are dependent on alcohol are employed. Some studies indicate that young males are more prone to substance abuse than other groups. Given the preponderance of young men working in mines, mine operators may find drug-free workplace campaigns especially beneficial.

To learn more about how to participate in Drug-Free Work Week and ways to promote drug-free workplace messages — during the campaign and throughout the year — visit the Labor Department’s Working Partners for an Alcohol- and Drug-Free Workplace Program Web site at [www.dol.gov/workingpartners](http://www.dol.gov/workingpartners).

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