Alcohol and drugs toolbox talk

Health · about 5 minutes · read it out, or say it in your own words

SITE OR JOB	DATE	PRESENTER

A building site has heights, open edges, plant, power tools and live electricity, and a person under the influence puts the whole crew at risk, not only themselves. South African law is clear that nobody may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs at a workplace, and that an employer may not let such a person enter or stay. Medicines that cause drowsiness are covered too.

SAY THIS

The rule is simple

Nobody comes to site under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and nobody drinks, uses, carries or offers them here. That includes the lunch break and the bakkie in the car park. The law says the employer must not allow anyone who is, or appears to be, under the influence to enter or stay on site. If you arrive in that state, you will be sent off site safely, not left to work.

Why it matters here

Alcohol and drugs slow your reactions, upset your balance and make you think you are doing fine when you are not. On a site that means falls from scaffolds and roofs, hands in machines, and mistakes with plant and vehicles. It is not only you who gets hurt: the person below you, the banksman, the labourer next to the mixer.

Last night still counts

Your body needs time to clear alcohol, and coffee, a shower or sleep do not speed it up. After heavy drinking on a Friday or at a weekend party, you can still be affected and unsafe on Monday morning. The same goes for dagga. It can still affect your balance and reactions after you stop feeling high, and the site rule covers it just like alcohol.

Medicines

Some medicines, including ones from the chemist without a prescription, such as some flu and allergy tablets, can make you drowsy or dizzy. Read the leaflet or ask the pharmacist. If a medicine affects you, tell the supervisor before you start work. You do not have to say what it is for. We will give you work that is safe for you that day.

If you are worried about a mate

If someone looks or smells drunk, is unsteady, slurring or acting strangely, do not let them climb, drive or use machines. Tell the supervisor quietly. It is not snitching; it may save their life or yours. If they are very drowsy, confused or collapse, call the first aider and get medical help, because it could be something else, such as low sugar, heat or a head injury.

Getting help

If drinking or drugs are becoming a problem for you, asking for help early is the strong thing to do. Talk to the supervisor, your clinic or doctor in confidence. It is much better to sort it out before it costs you an injury or your job.

CHECK ON SITE TODAY

- ☐ Is the site rule on alcohol and drugs on the notice board and explained at induction?
- ☐ Is everyone who will work at height, drive or operate plant today fit and alert?
- ☐ Has anyone told us about medicine that affects them, and do they have suitable work today?
- ☐ Are there any bottles, cans or other signs of drinking on site or in site vehicles?
- ☐ Does everyone know who to tell, quietly, if they are worried about someone?

ASK THE CREW

- ? Why do you think some people still drink at lunch on site?
- ? How would you handle it if the person who drives the crew home had been drinking?
- ? What should someone do if they took cold and flu tablets this morning?
- ? What would make it easier for someone with a drinking problem to ask for help here?

THE LAW

General Safety Regulations, 1986, regulation 2A: Intoxication; Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, section 14: General duties of employees at work. What each one says, in plain words, with links: sitediary.co.za/toolbox-talks/alcohol-and-drugs/

Toolbox talk attendance register

TOPIC

Alcohol and drugs on site

DATE

SITE OR JOB

TIME

PRESENTER

COMPANY

PRESENTER SIGNATURE

By signing, I confirm that I attended this toolbox talk, that it was given in a language I understand, and that I could ask questions.

NO.	NAME AND SURNAME	COMPANY OR TRADE	SIGNATURE
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Keep this register in the site health and safety file. Log the talk in today's site diary with a photo of this page.