



Bureau of Workers'  
Compensation

Governor John R. Kasich  
Administrator/CEO Stephen Buehrer



Department of Alcohol &  
Drug Addiction Services

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **BWC, ODADAS Observe Drug-Free Workplace Week**

Columbus - A skilled, healthy and drug-free workforce is the engine that drives Ohio's economic recovery. That's why the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS) and the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) are partnering to support **National Drug-Free Work Week** Oct. 15-20. This annual awareness campaign underscores the importance of drug-free workplaces and encourages workers with substance abuse problems to seek help.

"Substance abuse can have a major impact on an employer's bottom line, contributing to everything from workplace accidents and employee mistakes to absenteeism and increased workers' compensation claims," said ODADAS Director Orman Hall. "We are proud to partner with our colleagues at BWC to promote a healthy, drug-free workplace environment for Ohio workers. A safer workplace is always a more productive workplace."

Employers can insulate their businesses from the negative effects of substance use in the workplace by developing drug-free workplace programs that educate employees about alcohol and drug use and encourage individuals with related problems to seek help.

BWC offers Ohio's employers assistance in maintaining safe workplaces, including targeting the prevention of workplace injuries related to substance use with the Drug-Free Safety Program. Employers can receive a premium discount for implementing a loss-prevention strategy addressing workplace use of alcohol and other drugs. Nearly 7,000 Ohio employers participate in the Drug-Free Safety program.

"Preventing drug use in the workplace is one way employers can proactively work to prevent on-the-job injuries and illness while achieving both long-range safety and cost-saving benefits," said BWC Administrator/CEO Steve Buehrer. "The Drug-Free Safety Program is just one of many tools BWC offers to employers who understand that safety and prevention are their most effective tactics for keeping their employees injury-free and their workers' comp costs low."

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, alcohol and drug abuse has been estimated to cost American businesses roughly \$81 billion in lost productivity in just one year, \$37 billion due to premature death and \$44 billion due to illness. Substance abusers are three to four times more likely to have an accident on the job and five times more likely to file a workers' compensation claim, according to the Employee Assistance Society of North America.

Ohioans in all 88 counties have access to quality, cost-effective alcohol and other drug addiction services. If you or someone you know needs help, call Ohio's toll-free helpline 1-800-788-7254, or visit ODADAS' online treatment locator at [www.odadas.ohio.gov](http://www.odadas.ohio.gov).

More information about the Drug-Free Workplace Program and all of BWC's workplace safety services is available at [www.ohiobwc.com](http://www.ohiobwc.com).

Additional drug-free workplace resources are available at:

<http://www.samhsa.gov/>

<http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/hiring/drugfree.htm>

[http://ndwa.org/DFWW\\_Print.php](http://ndwa.org/DFWW_Print.php).

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