Substance Use Disorders in the Workforce

How substance use affects your workplace may depend on your industry. Different sectors incur various hazards. In order to keep your workplace safe from undue risk associated with substance use, it is important to understand how it may manifest in the workplace. As with any safety insecurity, these come at a cost.

Substance Use by Industry
- Alcohol is the most commonly misused drug in the U.S. (Figure 1.1).¹
- The construction (15%) and entertainment, recreation, and food industries (15.3%) have the highest rates of substance use disorders (SUDs) among employees compared to other industries.

Costs
- The average excess cost is $3,134 per employee with SUD.²
- One study found drug abuse was responsible for a 17% reduction in productivity for men and an 18% reduction in productivity for women.³

Figure 1.1: Past Month Rates of Substance Use Among People Aged 12 or Older: Percentages, 2002-2014, 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)

Alcohol is the most commonly misused drug in the U.S.
Costs Avoided

- Employers save on average $2,607 per employee who is in recovery for SUD.4


2National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) 2012-2014.


4National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) 2012-2014.