

# Construction Industry Has High Rate of Drug and Alcohol Use, Study Shows

More than one in seven construction workers surveyed said they had used illicit drugs in the previous month, and almost one in six reported heavy alcohol consumption, according to a study released in June by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. That's close to twice the rate reported by the average worker: When data in all industry categories are counted, one in 12 employees surveyed reported using illicit drugs, and about the same number reported heavy alcohol use.

The study, "Worker Substance Use and Workplace Policies and Programs," is based on information collected during 2002, 2003, and 2004 from interviews with about 128,000 full-time workers between the ages of 16 and 64. Heavy alcohol use is defined as the consumption of five

or more drinks on a single occasion, on five or more occasions in the previous month.

The authors note that some industries have high concentrations of workers with characteristics associated with illicit drug or heavy alcohol use. For example, the study shows that younger employees had higher rates of heavy alcohol and illicit drug use than did older employees, and men had higher rates than women did. Thus, industries like construction, which employ a lot of young, male workers, were associated with high rates of alcohol and drug use.

Not surprisingly, the data show that heavy alcohol users and illicit drug users both had higher rates of absenteeism and job turnover.

A smaller percentage of illicit drug users worked for businesses with

drug and alcohol programs than worked for businesses without the programs, according to the data. The authors conclude that "workplace drug and alcohol policies and programs serve to communicate a 'no-drugs-allowed' attitude that may deter current users from applying and working for employers with this position and also may encourage current users to leave the organization."

The study does not evaluate, however, whether workplace drug and alcohol programs help current employees reduce substance use.

View the entire report at [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov). Free resources to help businesses develop job-site drug and alcohol policies and programs are available at [www.dol.gov/workingpartners](http://www.dol.gov/workingpartners), a Web site sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. — *Laurie Elden*

## Former Wood-Treatment Site Gets Superfund Cleanup

On June 18, the EPA began a "time-critical removal action" at the abandoned Kentucky Wood Preserving plant in Winchester, Ky., to secure the property against vandals and to arrange for the disposal or reuse of toxic chemicals stored on site.

A former employee at the wood-treatment plant, which ceased operations in October 2006, alerted the EPA in November that conditions at the facility could pose a health risk. When the EPA and the Kentucky Department of Environmental Protection

(KDEP) responded with a site visit in April 2007, officials identified a number of hazardous conditions.

Wastewater in the containment sump was within a foot of overflowing — the total quantity of wastewater on site, including what was in other storage tanks, was estimated at 40,000 gallons. Process tanks were estimated to contain some 30,000 to 40,000 gallons of CCA wood treatment. Inspectors also found eight 55-gallon drums, one of which was labeled hazardous waste. Tests of samples taken that day con-

firmed that the soil had high levels of arsenic and chromium.

After the KDEP discovered in a June visit that vandals had broken into the plant, officials gave the project a time-critical status, citing concerns that deteriorating containers, heavy rainfall, or more vandalism could cause the release of hazardous substances.

The first phase of the cleanup — securing the site, clearing debris, and arranging for removal of wood-treating chemicals — was expected to take six weeks at a cost of \$250,000. — *L.E.*

**Home Depot fired four employees** for allegedly accepting kickbacks worth millions of dollars, CBS News reported in July. The incident, in which purchasing managers at the company's Atlanta headquarters are said to have received payments from Asian flooring suppliers in exchange for prime retail space, has spurred the company to institute a zero-tolerance policy regarding gifts of any kind from vendors. Home Depot hasn't released the names of the employees or the vendors, but said it was cooperating with federal investigators.

**Fiber Composites**, the maker of Fiberon, Veranda, and Portico decking products, announced in July

that it has agreed to purchase Louisiana-Pacific's WeatherBest brand and Meridian, Idaho, manufacturing facility. With the acquisition, North Carolina-based Fiber Composites will gain better access to the western U.S. market and, according to the company, will become the second-largest manufacturer of composite decking and railing. Terms of the sale were not disclosed, but the deal is expected to close in October.

**In other consolidation news**, Correct Building Products, maker of CorrectDeck decking and accessories, announced in June that it had acquired Tendura Corp. Correct Building Products, based in Biddeford, Maine, had previously

taken over the manufacturing of Tendura porch flooring under an October 2006 agreement. Both Tendura tongue-and-groove porch flooring and CorrectDeck decking are polypropylene-based composite products.

**The National Ornamental & Miscellaneous Metals Association** has contracted with the National Association of Home Builders Research Center to examine the issue of guards and child safety. The Research Center is studying height, spacing, orientation, size, and pitch of guards, in reference to children's physical and cognitive abilities at different ages. The study is expected to be completed before autumn.

## 2007 Shows & Events

### September 27-30

#### **Home Improvement and Remodeling Show**

Oregon Remodelers Association  
Portland, Ore.  
503/788-2274  
www.oregonremodelers.com

### September 27-29

#### **Sunbelt Builders Show**

Texas Association of Builders and NAHB  
Grapevine, Texas  
800/252-3625  
www.sunbeltbuildersshow.com

### October 8-9

#### **Wood-Plastic and Natural Fiber Composites 2007**

Principia Conferences  
Baltimore  
410/531-5211  
www.principiaconferences.com

### October 9-12

### Remodeling Show 2007

Hanley Wood Exhibitions  
Las Vegas  
866/860-1964  
www.theremodelingshow.com

### October 17-20

#### **StonExpo 2007**

Hanley Wood Exhibitions  
Las Vegas  
866/860-1971  
www.stonexpo.com

### October 18-19

#### **New York State Builders Show**

New York State Builders Association  
Verona, N.Y.  
518/465-2492  
www.nysba.com

### October 30-November 2

#### **JLC Live Pacific Northwest**

Residential Construction Show  
Hanley Wood Exhibitions  
Seattle  
800/261-7769  
www.jlclive.com

### November 12-16

#### **Aqua Show 2007**

Hanley Wood Exhibitions  
Las Vegas  
800/766-7807  
www.aquashow.com

### November 15-16

#### **Building Industry Show 2007**

Building Industry Association of Southern California  
Long Beach, Calif.  
909/396-9993  
www.buildingindustryshow.com

### November 27-30

#### **International Pool & Spa Expo/Backyard Living Expo**

Hanley Wood Exhibitions  
Orlando, Fla.  
888/869-8522  
www.poolandspaexpo.com ❖