

## DRUG-FREE WORK WEEK TALKING POINTS

- Drug-free work week is October 20-26, 2008.
- No business is immune to the problems that drug and alcohol abuse can cause in the workplace. **Most adults who abuse drugs or are dependent on alcohol are employed:** U.S. Government statistics show that 75.5 percent of the 17.4 million illicit drug users aged 18 or older in 2007 ([latest data available](#)) were employed either full or part time.
- **Substance use and abuse in the mining population is at least comparable to the general U.S. adult working population.** It may even be slightly worse, given the preponderance of young males – a population more prone to substance abuse than other groups – in mining.
- **Substance use/abuse in the nation’s workplaces will not go away.** It is everyone’s responsibility – workers, managers, owners, families and friends – to work together to control and eliminate substance use and abuse in the workplace.
- **There is a direct correlation between substance abuse and accidents/fatalities in the workplace.** Everyone knows it. Everyone has seen it. Many have been affected by it – and some have died from it.
- **Up to 40 percent of industrial fatalities and 47 percent of industrial injuries can be linked to alcohol use and alcoholism.** ([Source: SAMHSA, U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services](#)).
- **Employees who use drugs are 3.6 times more likely to be involved in a workplace accident and 5 times more likely to file a workers’ compensation claim.** ([Source: SAMHSA](#))
- **The safety and health decisions and choices miners and operators make in the mining workplace are critical to maintaining safe and healthful workplaces and safe and healthy miners.**
- Some of those safety and health decisions and choices involve using or abusing drugs or alcohol in the workplace. **Those decisions can have devastating consequences** not only for miners themselves, but also for their coworkers, families, friends and communities.
- **As a mining professional, one of your responsibilities is to work toward a safe, healthy and alcohol- and drug-free workplace – not only for yourself, but for all the coworkers on whom your and your fellow miners’ safety and security also depends.** This includes reminding your friends and coworkers that mixing drugs or alcohol with mining is a recipe for disaster.

Here is a link for the Drug Enforcement Administration’s State Fact Sheets page:  
<http://www.dea.gov/statistics.html>

The Fact Sheets contain useful information about the drugs of choice in your state – you can use them to get more detailed information to add to talking points, or to print out to hand out.