

# [ DRUGS & ALCOHOL ]

by JERRY ROCHE / Editor-in-Chief

A company's typical "controlled substance" policy might read:

*"The use, possession, sale or transfer of alcohol or illegal drugs on company-owned or company-controlled property or in company-owned or company-leased vehicles, or reporting to work while under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug, is strictly forbidden.*

*"When there is reasonable cause to believe that an employee's physical or mental faculties may be impaired during work time as the result of alcohol or unprescribed drug use, the company may require a physical examination, which may include drug testing. Refusal...within a designated time period may result in discipline up to and including discharge."*

Every once in a while, an employee nonetheless might show up for work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or get caught using such substances while on the job. In the 1990s, it's simply a fact of life, and most employers have been through this wringer more than once.

But what's more important is what supervisors and employers are doing with those employees so affected.

There are a variety of solutions to this problem,

depending on how much compassion your department or company is willing to show. Many employers won't tolerate a single drug or alcohol incident and summarily dismiss the employee. Others offer a two- or three-step process that can ultimately end in dismissal. The first steps might include counseling and/or testing for drugs.

This month, we're asking you to tell us how you deal with drugs in the workplace. How often do you have this problem? Does your program(s) work? What are some of the consequences your company or department has suffered from having an alcohol or drug

abuser on staff? (We encourage you to tell us your stories, but please don't mention offenders by name. If you desire anonymity, please tell us and we won't use your name in the magazine.)

We'll print your responses in our April magazine so that others can learn from your experiences. This is not a popular topic, nor is it easy to talk or write about. But your experiences can help the green industry beat the problem. **LM**

## Your turn

Tell us your solutions to **DRUG & ALCOHOL** problems. Tear out or photocopy this page and return it to us. Or e-mail us. If we print your response in the April issue's "Talk Back" column, you'll receive a free high-quality Landscape Management baseball cap. Deadline for responses: March 1st. Fax to: (216) 891-2675. Mail to: LM Talk Back, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. E-mail to: 7553.502@compuserve.com.

How many instances of drug/alcohol have your employees had in the **past year?** \_\_\_\_\_ **five years?** \_\_\_\_\_

What methods have proven most effective in controlling this problem?

COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_  
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What have been the consequences of having employees "under the influence" on the job?

COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_  
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Please check here  if you don't want your name used in the magazine.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_