



NC Department of Environmental Quality

Workplace Intoxication

rev. 08-2023



Workplace Intoxication

NIH Statistics:

- 1.83% (2.3 million) of workers drink before work
- 7.06% (8.9 million) of workers drink during work
- 9.23% (11.6 million) of people work with hangovers
- 15% (19.2 million) of workers are affected in some way by alcohol in the workplace

(Source: National Institutes of Health)



Intoxication and Workplace Accidents

- Drug or alcohol abuse contributes to 65% of accidents in the workplace.
- 35%-50% of worker's compensation claims are related to drug or alcohol abuse.

(Source: US DOL, Dec. 20, 2022)



Signs of Intoxication: Appearance

- Red, watery, or glassy eyes
- Disheveled clothing
- Sweating
- Droopy Eyelids
- Lack of eye focus
- Red or flushed face





Signs of Intoxication: Inhibitions

- Overly friendly
- Loud
- Annoying
- Use of profanity



Signs of Intoxication: Communication

- Argumentative
- Belligerent
- Irrational statements
- Losing train of thought

Signs of Intoxication:

Coordination

- Fumbling items
- Swaying
- Drowsy
- Bumping into things
- Falling



Signs of Intoxication:

Personality

- Mood swings
- Isolated behavior
- Overly outgoing
- Trying to cause arguments
- Overly affectionate to strangers



Talking with Intoxicated People

- Use his or her name if you know it
- Speak clearly with simple questions
- Be clear but non-threatening
- Avoid “hot button” topics
- Speak slowly and gently
- Adjust your speaking pace to theirs
- Be brief and clear



Interacting with Intoxicated People

- Remain calm
- Listen
- Maintain eye contact
- Do not argue
- Do not raise your voice or make sudden movements
- Do not embarrass them, especially in front of others

