



Spotlight on...
drugs and alcohol

**CONSIDERATE
CONSTRUCTORS
SCHEME**

Case Study: Bowmer + Kirkland

Bowmer + Kirkland has no higher priority than safety. For this reason, the company has developed a drugs and alcohol policy which gives clear guidance and information on the impact of alcohol, drugs and other substances in the workplace. Bowmer + Kirkland also recognises the serious risk to road safety, and therefore also enforces its policy to regulate drink and drug driving. This policy, as well as regular random and for cause testing, is extended to all construction sites and subcontractors.

A responsibility to the company's employees is maintained by following the guidance below:

- **Ensure a safe and healthy working environment and recognises that this may be compromised by those who misuse/abuse alcohol, drugs or other substances;**
- **Ensure that its business and commercial interests are not jeopardised as a consequence of any such misuse/abuse;**
- **Ensure that a reasonable balance between the company's interests and the rights of an employee to a private life is maintained;**
- **Ensure all employees understand the implications of alcohol, drugs or other substance misuse/abuse on the workplace.**

Bowmer + Kirkland ensure due diligence is exercised through a thorough testing procedure. The following circumstances warrant drugs and alcohol testing:

- **Pre-employment screening**
- **For cause conduct (behavioural and post-accident related)**
- **Random yearly testing**

The specialist healthcare company, Hampton Knight Health care carries out the testing procedure and results. To find out more please click [here](#).

For cause testing is carried out by the company's equipped and accredited safety advisors, allowing the capability to follow procedure situationally, on-site.

The company will apply the limit of 80mg/100ml Blood Alcohol Concentration or equivalent in Breath Alcohol Concentration within the scope of the policy. This is in line with the current UK drink drive limit.

The use of illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs is not permitted and therefore any level of detection is a breach of policy.

The current daily guidelines for alcohol consumption are 2 – 3 units or less for women and 3 – 4 units or less for men. Refraining one day should not mean excess on another. All employees are responsible for ensuring they are not over the company limit of 80mg/100ml Blood Alcohol Concentration whilst at work.

A pocket guide is available for managers which provides useful information on testing outcomes as well as a detailed layout of the process itself.

Bowmer + Kirkland recognises that alcohol, drug and other drug dependency can be defined as an illness, which can be overcome by the appropriate treatment. Where a person's alcohol, drug or other substance misuse/abuse becomes a dependency problem then the employee is encouraged to seek assistance of the company at the earliest opportunity. They will be offered help and support through the Human Resources Department and provided with a relevant treatment support programme. Employees will be treated sympathetically, and in the strictest confidence.

External helplines are also provided for independent support such as:

1. Drinkline – 0800 9178282
2. National Drugs Helpline – 0800 776600

The policy itself provides information for all employees regarding how drugs and alcohol can affect the body:

- **Co-ordination and the ability to control eyes, hands and movement**
- **Reaction speed and the ability to judge distance accurately**
- **Short-term memory**
- **Ability to make effective and rational decisions**
- **Interaction between colleagues.**

It also highlights how a drugs and/or alcohol dependency could affect an individual:

- **Lateness and absenteeism**
- **Repeated absence from post or extended breaks**
- **Deterioration of their work performance, output and accuracy**
- **Unreliability**
- **Deteriorating relationships with colleagues etc**
- **Sudden mood changes and/or unusual irritability or aggression**
- **Dishonesty/theft or borrowing money from colleagues**
- **Reduced concern for personal appearance**

It is reminded to not fall under a false sense of security regarding the 3-4 units remaining under the drink drive limit myth. In actual fact, it is not as clear cut as this and other factors must be considered such as:

- **ABV (alcohol by volume) of the drink**
- **Size, age, sex, body build and metabolism**
- **Type and amount of food eaten**
- **Time of last drink consumed**