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## *Weekly Safety Tip*

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October 10, 2016

### **SCI Safety News: Drug Positivity in U.S. Workforce Rises to Highest Level in a Decade (Part 2)**

*Source: [www.ehs.com](http://www.ehs.com)*

*By: Sandy Smith*

*Date: September 16, 2016*



“The DTI statistics for the last five years underscore the threat to employers – and employees – from drug abusers in our workplace. The numbers on hair testing – the methodology with the longest look-back and therefore a more telling measurement of regular use – show a 34-percent positive-rate increase for illegal drug use by the general workforce in the last five years,” said Mark de Bernardo, executive director, [Institute for a Drug-Free Workplace](http://www.instituteforadrugfree.com). “However, all the numbers for various testing methodologies confirm this disturbing trend and should provide a wake-up call to employers to do more to combat workplace substance abuse and to do it more effectively.”

In the general U.S. workforce, the rate of amphetamine, marijuana and [heroin](#) detection increased annually for the past five years in urine testing. Amphetamine positivity increased 44 percent and marijuana positivity increased 26 percent since 2011; almost half (45 percent) of individuals in the general U.S. workforce with a positive drug test for any substance in 2015 showed evidence of

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marijuana use. Heroin positivity in that period increased 146 percent. Oxycodone positivity rate has declined annually since 2011, confirming previous research showing that opioid prescriptions have declined in 49 states since 2012.

“This report shows a welcome decline in workplace drug test positives for certain prescription opiates but a disturbing increase in heroin positives. This rise in heroin should concern both policymakers and employers. Substance abuse is a safety risk for everyone. This new workplace evidence is an additional sign of the rising national heroin problem, this time in the workplace,” said Robert DuPont, M.D., former director of the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#) (NIDA).

Among urine test results indicating drug use for federally mandated, safety-sensitive employees, heroin positivity increased a relative 4.5 percent since 2014, and a relative 84 percent since 2011. In addition, positive test results for safety-sensitive workers showed a seven percent year-over-year increase in amphetamines (0.58 percent in 2015 versus 0.54 percent in 2014).

## SCI OSHA Update: OSHA's Standards Improvement Project, Proposed Revisions (Part 1)

*Source: <http://www.OSHA.gov>*

*Date: October 2016*

### **Reporting job-related hearing loss**

OSHA recordkeeping regulations require employers to record and report occupational injuries and illnesses. The proposed revision codifies current enforcement policy and clarifies that a determination whether an employee's hearing loss is "work-related" must be made using specific, clear criteria, which are also set out in OSHA regulations.

### **Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout)**

The proposed revision clarifies employers' duties under the lockout/tagout standard. The existing general industry standard requires protections against the "unexpected energization" of machinery during servicing. The proposed revision to remove the term "unexpected" reflects OSHA's original intent and eliminates confusion regarding applicability of the standard.

### **Chest X-Ray (CXR) Requirements**

The proposed revision removes the requirement for periodic CXR in the standards for inorganic arsenic, coke oven emissions, and acrylonitrile to make OSHA's requirement consistent with current medical practices and reduce employer burden and paperwork.



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## A Bushel of Facts About Wisconsin Apples

Fall has officially arrived and most local orchards are open for this beautiful season! The facts below are from the Wisconsin Apple Growers Association. Visit them online to learn more or find an orchard near you at [www.waga.org](http://www.waga.org)

### FOR YOUR HEALTH

- Antioxidants, especially quercetin, in apples and apple products play an essential role in reducing risks of prevalent diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer's.
- Apple consumption increases the number of good "gut" bacteria.
- Eating one apple a day for four weeks lowered blood levels of oxidized LDL, the "bad cholesterol," by 40%.
- Ursolic acid, a natural compound found in the apple's skin, may prevent muscle wasting that can result from aging or illness.
- Pectin in apples is a good source of soluble fiber.

### APPLE TIPS

- Store small quantities in your refrigerator and in plastic bags in the crisper--between 34 and 40 degrees. Don't allow them to freeze. Apples can absorb odors from other foods, keeping apples in plastic bags prevents this and helps apples retain their own moisture.
- Apples ripen six to ten times faster at room temperature than if they were refrigerated. One or two days sitting on a counter top and the fresh crunch of your apple is lost forever.
- Lemon juice helps prevent apple discoloration. Sprinkle a little lemon juice on sliced apples before adding to salads.

## X-Ray Storage

The proposed revision permits storage of x-rays in digital formats. OSHA adopted the existing requirement for storage of x-ray film before the existence of digital x-ray and storage technology.

## Lung-function testing

The proposed revisions update the lung-function testing (spirometry) requirements for the cotton dust standard to make them consistent with current medical practices and technology.

## Feral Cats

Existing requirements in the sanitation standard for Shipyard Employment specify that employers must maintain workplaces in a manner that prevents vermin infestation. OSHA recognizes that feral cats pose a minor, if any, threat, and tend to avoid human contact, and OSHA proposes to remove the term "feral cats" from the definition of vermin in the standard.

## 911 Emergency Services at Worksites

Existing construction regulations require employers to conspicuously post telephone numbers for ambulances, etc. at worksites located in areas where 911 emergency dispatch services are not available. The proposed revision updates this requirement to reflect the predominance of the use of cellular telephones at construction sites and the widespread adoption of 911 emergency dispatch services. The proposed revision requires the posting of location information at worksites in areas that do not have Enhanced 911 (which automatically supplies the caller's location information to the dispatcher).

## Permissible Exposure Limits (PELs)

The proposed revisions to the construction PELs requirements are corrections and clarifications to make this standard consistent with other OSHA PELs standards.

*Continued next week*

*What do you think?  
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*In Loving Memory... Jessica,  
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