



Drugs and Alcohol

September 2018

Site managers must ensure workers are fit for work and not under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at work. Drugs may include prescription medication, legal and illegal stimulants, and over the counter medication.

Follow these four simple steps to reduce risk of injury.

Identify



Identify workers that may appear under the influence of a substance, or not fit for work

Assess



Assess what activities these workers may be conducting and the risk of harm

Control



Use controls listed below to reduce the risk of injury to workers

Monitor



Review agreed action plans
Regular review of Worker Health Plan

Workers impaired by drugs and alcohol are a health and safety risk to themselves, others and may demonstrate the following:

- Erratic behaviour
- Increased absence
- More mistakes and accidents
- Always tired
- High functioning, followed by periods of absence
- Glassy eyes
- Having difficulty concentrating

Some facts about drugs and alcohol

- New Zealand's average alcohol consumption is 25L per person per year
- 18% of New Zealanders admit to being under the influence of drugs while driving
- 49% of New Zealanders admit to having tried illicit drugs
- 14% of people in drug and alcohol treatment have sedative dependence

Recent studies show that misuse of prescription drugs is as much a problem in New Zealand as anywhere else in the world – possibly more so because opioids like heroin aren't readily available

Controls include:



- Clear documented policy and guidelines on drugs and alcohol
- Do not allow people to work if you observe them to be unfit for work (do not rely only on D&A testing)
- Ensure workers report drugs being taken, whether prescription or over the counter medication
- Act on all observations of irregular behaviour

For more information see [A guide to Worker Health in Extractives](#) on the MinEx website.