

Health Impacts of Alcohol

A Construction Suicide Prevention Partnership Toolbox Talk *

www.suicide-stops-here.org

All of us in the construction community want to build better lives. We are working hard for ourselves, our families, and our communities with the jobs we all do every day. But many of us face daily challenges on and off the job site that we often set aside or don't want to admit.

People who work in construction are more likely to drink alcohol excessively, use substances, and have mental health problems. That's in part because of the nature of the work we do. We often have irregular work hours, frequent travel away from friends and family, and physical injury.

All of these contribute to the high rate of suicide in the construction industry. In fact, men who work in construction die by suicide more than any other occupation. The connection between alcohol and suicide is well-established. Over 20% of deaths by suicide involved alcohol intoxication.

We are not asking people to quit drinking, but instead to start a conversation about alcohol and how it affects our daily lives.

Drinking Definitions

What is a standard drink?

Beer: 12 fl. oz.
Wine: 5 fl. oz.
Liquor: 1.5 fl. oz.



What is heavy drinking?

Having more than 1-2 drinks every night for a week



What is binge drinking?

Consuming 4-5 or more drinks on a single occasion



The construction community is not alone in excessive drinking. In Oregon, 1 out of 5 adults drinks excessively. Many people drink excessively and may not realize it. Excessive alcohol use can cause physical harms such as increasing the risk for cancer, liver failure and heart disease. When we are injured, drinking can slow our recovery. In construction, we are also at higher risk for injury or death when one of us comes to work hungover or under the influence of alcohol.

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Tips for Drinking Less Alcohol

	Set Limits			Count Your Drinks	
	Track Your Drinks with an App			Avoid places or activities that cause you to binge drink	
	Eat when drinking			Make small changes in your daily life, like not keeping alcohol in your home	

We Can Support Each Other

Job sites can be dangerous. We need to be able to count on our crew members to stay safe. That means coming to work sober and not hungover. But we can also help each other after work. Let's support one another by talking about how alcohol affects our daily lives. Are there moments when we can drink less? Can we create opportunities where alcohol doesn't play such a significant role outside of work?

We could all consider new ways to think about alcohol. We welcome your thoughts and ideas.

If You or Someone You Know is Struggling...

The Alcohol and Drug Helpline serves anyone who needs information, support, or access to resources and treatment for alcohol and other substance use disorders. You can reach them by calling 800-923-4357. They are available 24/7/365.

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide or going through any type of mental health crisis, call or text 988 to reach the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline to access immediate support.

For more resources: www.Suicide-Stops-Here.org

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