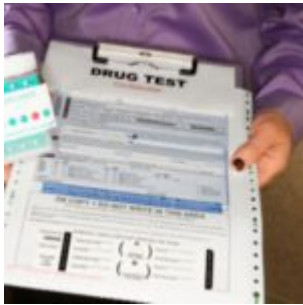# Safety Pros Favour Some Random Drug & Alcohol Testing

Drug and alcohol testing of workers—particularly random testing—is a hot button topic that's sure to elicit strong responses on both sides.

On one hand, workers who are drunk or high on drugs on the job pose a safety hazard to themselves and their co-workers. So testing to identify such workers is seen by some as a necessary safety measure.

On the other hand, drug and alcohol testing is invasive of workers' privacy rights. And a positive test result doesn't always mean a worker is *currently* impaired.

So we recently asked our readers if they thought workers should be subjected to random drug and alcohol testing. Here's what they said:

- 64% said yes, but only those in safety sensitive positions, regardless of industry
- 29% said no, workers should only be tested for cause or after a serious safety incident
- 5% said yes, but only those in certain high-risk industries.

In many ways, the poll results reflect a current trend toward random drug testing.

For example, in Alberta, a group of employers, labour

associations and unions recently launched a two-year initiative on the effectiveness of comprehensive workplace drug and alcohol programs. The [Drug and Alcohol Risk Reduction Pilot Project](#)'s mandate is to establish best practices for random alcohol and drug testing for safety-sensitive work sites and positions.

Implementing a drug and/or alcohol testing program in a workplace is complicated. OHS Insider can explain:

- The [law](#) on such testing, including the seven basic rules
- How to create an [enforceable testing policy](#).

We also have:

- A [checklist](#) for reasonable cause testing for drugs and/or alcohol
- Model [post-incident drug and/or alcohol testing procedures](#).

And you can go to [Safety Smart](#) for:

- A safety talk [handout](#) on substance abuse in the workplace
- An [article](#) on the effects of drug use

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