

ILLICIT DRUG USE AND THE ALBERTA WORKPLACE 1992 - 2002

September, 2003

Substance Use and Gambling in the Alberta Workplace, 2002: A Replication Study (AADAC, 2003) provided current information and trend data on substance use and gambling in the Alberta workplace as a follow-up to similar research done in 1992. Employees (2,836), employers (755) and union representatives (88) provided information about the prevalence and patterns of substance use and gambling among Alberta workers. Specifically, 1891 employees aged 18+ were asked about illicit drug use.

Prevalence and Patterns of Illicit Drug Use by Workers

Prevalence and patterns of illicit drug use among Alberta workers remained relatively unchanged between 2002 and 1992. Regarding overall use, the number of Alberta workers who reported that they had used drugs within the last 12 months rose slightly (10% in 2002; 6% in 1992). Cannabis use increased (10% up from 6% in 1992). In comparison, 8% of Albertans reported using cannabis in 1994. Other illicit drug use by Alberta workers remained the same since 1992 (1% or less for cocaine, hallucinogens, stimulants, opiates and other street drugs).

TABLE 1: ILLICIT DRUG USE AMONG ALBERTA EMPLOYEES: 2002 AND 1992

ILLICIT DRUG USE IN PAST YEAR	2002	1992
	10%	6%
TYPE OF ILLICIT DRUG USE	2002	1992
Cannabis (marijuana/hash)	10%	6%
Cocaine/crack	1%	1%
LSD/PCP/other hallucinogens	1%	1%
Amphetamines/other stimulants	1%	N/A
Heroin/other opiates	0%	0%
Other street drugs	0.2%	0.4%

Of the 10% who reported using illicit drugs, 3% reported no problems associated with drug use and 2% reported moderate to substantial problem drug use according to responses to the Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST).

TABLE 2: DRUG ABUSE SCREENING TEST (DAST): 2002

NO DRUG USE	DAST PROFILES			
	No Problem Drug Use	Low Problem Drug Use	Moderate Problem Drug Use	Substantial Problem Drug Use
90%	3%	5%	2%	0.4%

...over

Illicit Drug Use in the Workplace

Very few Alberta workers used drugs while at work (1%) or within four hours of coming to work (2%). Of the 1% who used drugs at work, 44% reported using drugs at least once a week at work. Cannabis was the most commonly used drug at work. It is estimated that a total of 16,738 employees used drugs at work during the previous year.

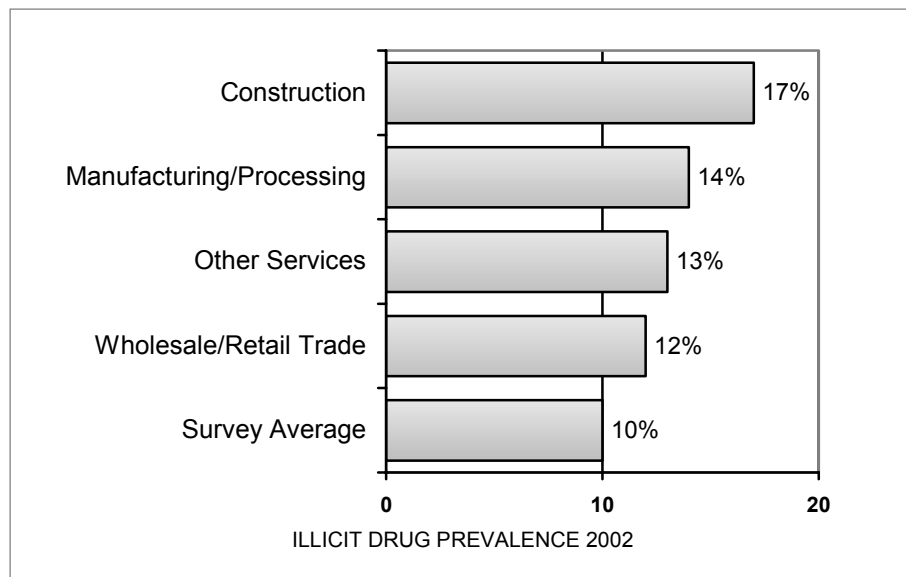
TABLE 3: ILLICIT DRUG USE AT WORK: 2002

USE AT WORK IN PAST YEAR	Yes	FREQUENCY OF OCCURENCE				
		Less than 1 time per month	1-3 times per month	Once a week	2-3 times a week	4+ times a week
While at work	1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%
Within 4 hours of coming to work	2%	1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%

Illicit Drug Prevalence by Industry

Industries where employees were most likely to report drug use in the past year in 2002 included construction (17%) and manufacturing/processing (14%).

FIGURE 4: DRUG USE BY INDUSTRY (DURING THE PAST YEAR)



Note: there were too few cases to report in the following industries: Agriculture, Finance/Insurance/Real Estate, Forestry/ Mining, Hospitals/Health Care, Public Administration, Social Services, Telecommunications, Transportation, Upstream Oil/Gas, and Utilities.