

Workplaces and Substance Use

Construction Industry



We cannot be impaired when we come to work, and that took a while ... to know that company time is company time. — Study participant



It's a culture of having some drinks, smoking some weed. — Study participant



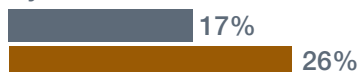
Workplace culture may encourage substance use. Some people working in safety-sensitive* (SS) and non-safety-sensitive* (NSS) construction positions reported thinking that it was **generally acceptable to use alcohol or cannabis** before or during work.

Acceptance of alcohol use

In their workplace culture



By their close co-workers



■ Non-Safety-Sensitive
■ Safety-Sensitive

Acceptance of cannabis use

In their workplace culture



By their close co-workers



About **1 in 5 people** who work in SS construction positions reported feeling pressure from others at their workplace to use alcohol or other drugs before or during work.



Workplace cultures that accept substance use immediately before or during work for some oil and gas, forestry, and mining businesses is likely working against employers' efforts to manage or reduce substance use risks and improve workers' well-being.



Some businesses have improved approaches to managing substance use risks, such as developing comprehensive policies, training staff, offering accommodations, fostering peer support programs, and setting up mental and substance use health supports.

Contact us at workplace@ccsa.ca for training or for more information and resources such as our [trades toolkit](#).

Background: The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction conducted a national study about workplace policies and practices related to substance use and working in various industries. The information presented here is from construction employees and managers who participated in a survey and focus groups, and individuals affected by substance use.

Suggested citation: Meister, S., Barker, B., Dassieu, L., Wood, S., Beirness, D., & Cragg, S. (2025). *Substance use and the workplace — workplace culture: Construction industry* [Infographic]. Ottawa, Ont.: Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction.

*Safety-sensitive positions pose potential physical risk to self, co-workers, the public or the environment (e.g., heavy equipment operators, medical practitioners); and non-safety-sensitive pose low or no risks (e.g., office staff, retail clerk).