

Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting

The logo for Apollo Mechanical Contractors is a dark blue oval with a white border. Inside the oval, the word "Apollo" is written in a white, cursive script font. Below "Apollo", the words "MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS" are written in a white, sans-serif, all-caps font, flanked by two horizontal white lines. Underneath that, the tagline "Building People Who Build Great Things" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

Apollo

— MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS —
Building People Who Build Great Things

Home Healthy - Home Safe

Date: June 2022

Opioid Abuse

Prescription opioids are typically used to treat moderate to severe pain, but they can also be dangerous. Regular use of opioids can increase your tolerance and dependence, requiring higher and more frequent doses. Even when prescribed and taken as directed by a physician, long term opioid use can lead to an addiction called opioid use disorder. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that an average of 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose. The growing crises that account for overdose deaths from opioids have increased from 56,064 in 2020 to 75,673 in 2021 and a total of close to half a million overdoses since 1999.

Opioid abuse in the construction industry has been a growing concern as it has hit our industry very hard since the epidemic began in 1999. Research shows that from the years 2011 to 2015 those employed in the construction industry accounted for 26% of all opioid-related overdose deaths. Whenever we injure workers from our workforce, we run the risk of the employee needing pain prescriptions to help manage pain. The growing concern just highlights the need for employers to use wellness programs and be proactive about worker safety to help avoid scenarios that contribute to opioid use. Employers and Unions have started offering services to help those seeking treatment or information on substance abuse called EAP (Employee Assistance Programs). If you or someone you know is struggling with substance abuse you can call the national substance use treatment hotline at 1-800-662-4357.

Warning Signs of Opioid Abuse

- Persistent common cold symptoms and stomach issues.
- Extreme sleepiness, falling asleep when standing or sitting still.
- Isolation from family and friends.
- Unpredictable behavior as a result of withdrawal/Poor decision making.
- Issues with medical providers restricting medications and switching providers often.

Signs of Opioid Addiction.

- Failed attempts to stop or cut down on opioid use.
- Used opioids to help manage feelings of anger, loneliness, or depression.
- Experienced a decline in job performance or unemployment due to opioid use.
- Spend increased amounts of time securing, using, or recovering from opioid use.

Addiction is a chronic and progressive disease, but with the right help opioid use disorder is treatable.

HEALTHY OR SAFETY REMINDER: We do not rise to the level of our expectations; we fall to the level of our training.

Discussion Points/Quiz Questions:

1. What resources do you have to help you or loved one with addiction?
2. True or False: If it is prescribed, and you follow the prescription recommendation you will not get addicted to Opioids? - False