



On the job with Nyx

Hi, I'm Nyx (Greek goddess of night, powerful and protective). I'm a working German Shepherd of Czech lines and have just turned one year old. My handler Wayne and I make up one of the drug detection teams working for ScentTECH Ltd. We generally visit factories, apartments and schools. But, more recently, we have also been asked to search offices and professional organisations.

Handler Wayne says that there is an increasing prevalence of drug use among professionals; however, this is generally overlooked by employers. More commonly, we are finding the white powders (eg, methamphetamine) are the drug of choice in these environments.

Typically, a canine like me can clear an office and its occupants in less than 20 minutes. This makes it more cost effective and provides better coverage than drug testing.

So acute is a dog's scenting ability that I not only find drugs, I'm also able to detect when people have recently imbibed. No matter how careful you are, passive transfer will mean that detectable amounts of substance will remain on your person, clothes or possessions long after the drug has been used.

I have found drug scent in some very unusual places, including on car door handles, taped under seats and at the back of drawers, hidden in calculators and in food and garbage cans.

ScentTECH uses only independently validated dogs for its detection work. This requires that we train frequently to maintain the required high standards. But being a working dog, I love my job as it means I get to play with my favourite toy.

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