

FEATURE ARTICLES

SME'S ATTRACT HIGHER NUMBERS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSERS

Dr. Wayne Severn, ScentTECH Drug Detector Services

ScentTECH
DRUG DETECTOR SERVICES



New Zealand has not been immune to the worldwide growth in the use and trafficking of illicit drugs. This incurs an estimated \$1.31 billion social cost on the New Zealand economy. Of the more than 700,000 New Zealanders who use illicit drugs, the majority are employed and when they arrive for work, they don't leave their problems at the door.

New Zealand businesses pay a high price for substance abuse in the workplace. Some costs – increased absences, accidents and errors – are obvious. Others, such as low employee morale and high illness rates, are less obvious, but the effects are equally harmful.

Small business is big business in New Zealand. Small and medium sized enterprises (SME's), account for over 97% of active New Zealand businesses and employ 30% of the workforce. However, SME's are greatly disadvantaged when it comes to drug use in the workplace. They are less likely than large companies to have programmes in place to combat the problem and therefore they are more likely to be the "employer-of-choice" for illicit drug users wishing to evade detection. International studies indicate that among the full-time workforce, SME's employ over six times as many illicit drug users as large establishments.

The reasons small business owners fail to implement a drug-free workplace policy are many and varied but inevitably centre on the misconceptions that drug testing is "too expensive" or "not necessary because I know all of my workers". However, many drug users are adept at hiding their drug habits and they easily sail through interviews and background checks.



For the SME, the drug testing return on investment is probably even more meaningful. Proportionally, the cost of just one error caused by an impaired employee can have a greater impact on a small business than a large business. In some instances a single event will devastate a small company.

If small and medium sized employers do not want drug and alcohol users to view their business as a safe haven, there are affordable detection and testing services that can be adapted to any business setting and budget.

ScentTECH (<http://scenttech.co.nz/>) works with small, medium, and

large businesses, providing high quality drug and alcohol testing programmes using canine detection, urine testing and state-of-the-art" oral fluid technologies. There is simply no reason to put your company's hard earned reputation at risk of damage from employees using drugs and alcohol in your workplace.

For more information on drug detection and testing services, contact Wayne Severn, Operations Manager ScentTECH Ltd.

BERL New Zealand Drug Harm Index, 2008.

Drug Use in New Zealand; Key Results of the 2007/08 New Zealand Alcohol and Drug Use Survey.

US Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (1999). Worker Drug Use and Workplace Policies and Programs.

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Strictly Savvy is proud to announce the opening of Savvy Spaces. Savvy Spaces is a meeting and function room facility in Upper Hutt. There are two spacious and modern rooms available for hire with capacity ranging from 1 to 200. Full business facilities are available along with on-site event planners. They can take care of your event from guest list collation and sending invites through to event day management and post event follow up.

Savvy Spaces has free Wi-Fi, park surrounds, walking distance to the train station and free parking.

Visit the website for pricing and to see the rooms www.savvyspaces.co.nz.

Strictly Savvy has a special opening offer too – half price room hire for all bookings in February and March.



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