

## YOU CAN'T AFFORD *NOT* TO GET INVOLVED

May 20, 2009

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- Attorney General Kroger on substance abuse as a business issue
- OEDI Chair Chuck Carey talks about successes at A-dec
- Albany Chamber of Commerce discusses its efforts

### Kroger Proposes Overhaul of Prevention & Treatment in Oregon

Attorney General John Kroger called for a dramatic overhaul of the Oregon's system of drug treatment and prevention in a presentation to the OEDI Employer Task Group April 21. Citing a diffusion of authority among several state agencies and a lack of data on effectiveness, he called for a long-term state strategy and budget with accountability controls.



Kroger said that addressing substance abuse must also become a state priority. "We need a 10-year horizon to centralize the work under one person and elevate it beyond a single agency with accountability to the Governor."

Oregon's effort to put cold medications behind the counter is a good example, he felt, of how the 40-year focus on supply hasn't worked. Before that effort, nearly all methamphetamine was made locally; now most is made in Mexico and brought into Oregon to fill the gap.

"Reducing demand as well as supply must be part of the long-term plan as 10 years of data show savings of \$4-\$7 for every \$1 spent on treatment, which also results in decreases in crime." The super-majority of crimes in Oregon are drug-related and Oregon is in the bottom one-third of states in access to treatment, he said.

Kroger said that substance abuse also is clearly a business issue. "Benchmade Knives reported their greatest difficulty is finding and keeping drug-free employees. Over 90% of applicants failed the drug test when a national grocery chain attempted to open a store in a coastal community last fall. And Eastern Oregon farmers have difficulty insuring farm equipment that is continuously stolen and resold to feed drug habits."

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Portland Employer Drug-Free Initiative  
Prineville-Crook County Chamber  
Salem-Keizer Chambers  
Lake County/SCOEDD  
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### Get Involved!

### News & Events

May 29, 2009:  
Employer Breakfast Forum,  
Medical Marijuana Legislative  
Debrief, 8 - 9:30 am, Kaiser  
Town Hall, Portland  
[Download Flyer](#)

The opportunity for an overhaul may be HB 3353, proposed jointly with the Governor to require the various players to come together and develop a state strategy. Kroger said it would begin to integrate the various efforts by state agencies, counties, schools and the business community. "Business has a huge stake and can have a huge influence in making substance abuse prevention and treatment a priority in Oregon," he said.

### A-dec Keeps Quality and Productivity High as it Creates a Better Working Environment Using its Drug-free Policy



When a company provides products that deal with people's health, quality is of the utmost importance. Newberg, OR-based A-dec, manufactures dental equipment and even supplies places like VA hospitals, U.S. aircraft carriers, and Camp David.

To keep quality high, A-dec has used a drug-free workplace program since 1988.

Chuck Carey, Manager of Employee Health and Wellbeing at A-dec, says their program helps attract better employees and improves quality on the job and overall health and safety.

### No drugs means more quality, productivity

Carey said, "As we evolve into a lean manufacturing company, a drug-free workplace program helps to keep people productive, and the company profitable."

Carey sights the full buy-in from company executives and the federal drug policy guidelines as major components to the program's success. He says the company is up-front about its drug policy with job candidates, and he believes that sends a message.

"Some potential employees won't even bother to apply here after knowing we have a drug testing policy," said Carey. He says drug-free employees make A-dec a safer, more productive and, overall, a more pleasant place to work.

### Program costs are worth it

Carey knows some companies are concerned about drug-free workplace program costs, but he says "there are bigger costs if you go without one."

"Businesses might think they can't afford to implement a drug program, or they don't think they have enough employees to necessitate such a program," said Carey, "However, in this day and age, can you afford not to have a program? A drug program affects productivity, quality and workplace safety. When you don't have a program at your workplace you may be employing the people who wouldn't even take the drug test at another company with a drug program because they knew they'd fail."

Carey says having a drug-free workplace saves A-dec money and gives back to employees.

"We all have a financial stake in keeping a safe, healthy workplace," he said. "If we have to pay in claims due to substance abuse problems, that means money is tied up that is not going back to employees in programs such as profit sharing.

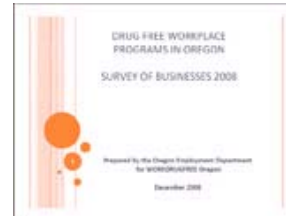
### Positive effects

Sept. 22, 2009:

Employer Seminar, Prescription Drug Abuse in the Workplace, 8-9:30 am, Salem Chamber of Commerce  
[Download Flyer](#)

Nov. 3, 2009:

Employer Seminar, An Employer's Guide to Beating Drug Tests (or Not), 8-9:30 am, Salem Chamber of Commerce  
[Download Flyer](#)



[Download the 2008 Business Survey on Drug-Free Workplace Programs in Oregon](#)



[Download 2009 Northwest Youth Careers Expo flyer](#)

As Carey has explained, the positives far outweigh the negatives. Quality, productivity and safety are all benefits - something all successful companies strive for. Plus, the policy ends up giving back to employees. See how a workplace drug policy can help you as an employer and an employee.

### **OEDI Partner Profile: Albany Chamber of Commerce**

Oregon's Albany Chamber of Commerce has been providing resources and support for its community and local businesses for 100 years. For nearly three years, the Chamber has also been an OEDI partner offering the community and its 700 local business members the resources they need to establish and maintain a drug-free working environment for nearly 18,000 employees.



Dianna Howell is the Albany Chamber of Commerce's task-force chairperson and will be on the Chamber Board as of June. She says the organization got involved with the OEDI program after hearing a presentation on the issues of drugs in the workplace. Dianna said, "The Chamber Board decided to create a task force that would develop a program and policies that would address [these] initiatives."

The Albany Chamber of Commerce offers a variety of services to area businesses to help them maintain or create their drug-free workplace. Some of the services include:

- A book of local resources for drug treatment and drug-free workplace policy development
- Seminars on how to identify drug problems in the workplace
- Seminars on how to address drugs in the workplace

In addition, the Chamber invited Oregon legislators to see an overview of the issues facing Oregon employers that attempt to address the use of drugs in the workforce. They also discussed legislation that would address these issues.

There are a number of key factors that contribute to the success of any local OEDI resource. What makes the Albany Chamber of Commerce a success with regards to being an OEDI resource? Dianna said, "Effective use of local resources, willing and enthusiastic businesses, and community volunteers who understand the importance [of the OEDI program] and are willing to work on these issues."

For other organizations that are OEDI resources or may want to become resources, Dianna offers this advice, "Be inclusive in the partners that you ask to assist you in this endeavor. [This means] including representatives from areas such as local schools, law enforcement, the medical community, as well as large and small industries/business partners."

For more information on the Albany Chamber of Commerce, visit [www.albanychamber.com](http://www.albanychamber.com). For more information about OEDI, please visit [www.oregonemployerdrugfree.org](http://www.oregonemployerdrugfree.org).

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## **Oregon Employer Drug-Free Initiative**

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