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# Issue Brief

## The Walsh Group

ADVANCING PUBLIC POLICY THROUGH RESEARCH

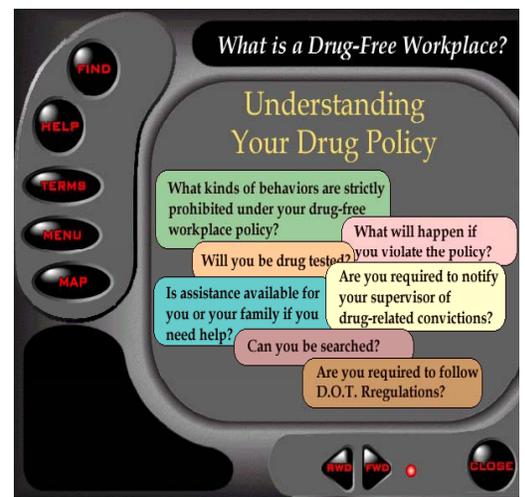
*This Spring Issue addresses TWG's involvement in Workplace Drug Testing Policy and Programs. The Summer Issue will focus on random student drug testing and new drug testing technologies.*

## Drugs in the Workplace: TWG Develops Web-based Drug-Free Workplace Training Programs

The value in establishing drug-free workplace programs (DFWPs) is well documented. Companies with DFWPs are associated with lower prevalence rates of current illicit drug use and heavy alcohol use among workers. In the Federally regulated industries (Transportation, Nuclear Power, and Energy), there are specific requirements for the development and implementation of DFWPs. With funding from a Small Business Innovative Research grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Walsh Group has developed a unique set of management tools to facilitate the implementation and compliance with such Federal regulations. These products include a series of interactive computer-based training programs.

The Walsh Group's approach provides consistency of program content through the utilization of computer-based interactive

training. This approach also offers flexibility in the time and location of training, which provides a cost-effective alternative to traditional methods. Courses are available online as well as on CDs. The "Employee Awareness and Education" and "Supervisory Training" programs are designed to meet DOT requirements. Users can undertake various training modules and complete the courses at their own convenience. Each program tracks the user's progress, and incorporates a final exam when training is complete. The program also provides the option to print sections for additional referencing and information. Upon completion of the instruction and a passing mark on the exam, a certificate of completion can be printed as evidence of passing the course. These programs allow employers to provide the required training to both employees and supervisors at a minimal cost and maximum flexibility.



*A screenshot from TWG's web-based Employee Education Training Program*



## TWG's Drug-Free Workplace Consulting Services

TWG's principals have been providing consulting services to major corporations and Federal entities on workplace drug testing policies and programs for more than 25 years. TWG experts can design, implement, monitor, and evaluate substance abuse policy to fit any company's needs. For more information please visit [www.walshgroup.org](http://www.walshgroup.org) or call 301-571-9494.



## TWG manages new large-scale drug testing database

*The goal of this project is to examine the linkages between specimen collection, laboratory analysis, and MRO review to better understand the prevalence of illegal drug use in the workforce.*

Hundreds of millions of U.S. employees have submitted to drug tests since the 1980s. Yet, the only national workplace drug-testing database available is Quest Diagnostics' "Drug Testing Index". While the "Index" provides valuable information regarding trends in drug use, its numbers can be misleading. This is due to the Index's inclusion of blind quality control samples and lab positives that are subsequently reversed in the Medical Review Officer (MRO) Process. (An MRO determines when a positive test is the result of the legal use of a drug. In these cases, it is reported to the client as a negative result.)

To comprehend the true prevalence of illegal drug use, a database is needed where it is possible to tease out these issues.

SAMHSA is the government organization that is charged with coordinating the Federal certification of laboratories to conduct workplace drug testing. They contracted with Research Triangle Institute International and The Walsh Group to develop such a database. To obtain the data, The Walsh Group partnered with the First Advantage Corporation, a major Medical Review service provider that in the past few years has acquired several large Medical Review firms (including Graystone, Employee Health Programs, and

Substance Abuse Management, Inc).

The result of these efforts is a database with nearly two million complete records of specimens collected during calendar years 2003 and 2004 from more than 9,000 companies. The database is expected to grow by a million new specimens each year. Categories that will be incorporated include: donor files, employer information, collection site information, laboratory result files, and MRO actions.

Initial data analyses are being submitted for presentation at the annual Society of Forensic Toxicology meeting in Austin, Texas in October 2006.

## Small Business Administration project achieves successes

*The Walsh Group partnered with three experienced DFWP service providers on a grant in which TWG coordinated the DFWP service delivery and a research effort to determine "what works" in three diverse business communities.*

Since 1999, The Walsh Group, under a grant from The U.S. Small Business Administration, has coordinated activities and conducted a cross-site evaluation of three sites providing drug-free workplace services throughout Florida. The project's goal was to determine what strategies work best in recruiting and helping small businesses to establish drug-free workplaces. The primary objectives included educating small business leaders about drug-free workplaces, creating interest among small business owners, providing technical and financial assistance through grant stipends leading to establishing a policy and implementation of a complete drug-free workplace program.

The three site centers and staff, located in Bradenton, Miami, and Pensacola, provided policy development, employee awareness education, supervisor training, and drug testing services to small businesses throughout the state. During the course of this grant, our centers assisted more than 750 small businesses in establishing full DFWP programs. Over 20,000 employees and supervisors received awareness education or training. A key finding of the project was that efforts to recruit small businesses to establish drug-free workplace programs were not sustainable without some kind of federal, state, or private assistance. For more information on this project, please visit [www.floridadrugfree.com](http://www.floridadrugfree.com)



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NOTABLE  
&  
QUOTABLE!

### In the News

#### Ohio 14<sup>th</sup> state to pass 'drugged driving' zero-tolerance legislation

In early April, Ohio's House and Senate passed a bill that will make it illegal to operate a motor vehicle with detectible levels of illegal drugs in blood or urine. The measure will go into effect 90 days after the bill is signed into law.

Ohio now becomes the 14th state to enact a Drugged Driving Per Se Law. With the inclusion of Ohio, nearly a third [32%] of all licensed drivers in the United States are now covered by zero tolerance drugged driving laws. The other 13 states with per se drugged driving legislation are: Arizona, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

#### High on Drug Testing

"The Bush Administration wants to bust motorists for 'driving while drugged'... The push for roadside drug testing is being driven in large part by Michael Walsh...."

-Rolling Stone Magazine  
[Aug. 11, 2005]