

# Executive Director's Report

## A Drug Free Workplace Benefits Everyone



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Drug Free Workplace. Those savings alone are important, but not nearly as important as what that certification represents: the company's commitment that drugs will not be tolerated in your workplace.

The 5 steps required for State certification as a Drug Free Workplace are detailed (in a succinct format) on this website:

<http://www.livedrugfree.org/georgia-drug-free-workplace.drugfree10.0.html>

If you know me at all, and you've seen me within the last six months, you know I'm a new graddaddy...and you've probably seen pictures! Perhaps having a new granddaughter, and thinking about all the trials and tribulations she'll be exposed to, is why I've become so very concerned about the drug problems our nation struggles with. I recently attended a briefing session on Georgia's Drug Free Workplace program, and I am thoroughly convinced that the only way we'll win the war on drugs is through the workplace. Georgia has a marvelous program which is administered by some of the most caring and passionate professionals I have ever encountered, yet (in my opinion), the program is sadly underutilized. As you read this message, I'll bet you think that your company is a Georgia-certified Drug Free Workplace...and I'll bet you're wrong. Your company may well be doing all the things necessary to qualify, but the vast majority of our Corporate Member companies are not State-certified, and thus are currently missing out on some significant savings which they probably already would qualify for if they simply registered for State certification as a

The best way to know for sure if an organization is really certified or not is to look at your company's certificate, which should be proudly displayed somewhere in your workplace. There may also be a decal on the front door of your business, or you can contact the Council on Drugs and Alcohol's Drug Free Workplace staff and they will check to see if your company is on their official list. My guess is that your company has a program in place, but just hasn't gone through the process of getting State-certified. If a company has a contract with the Federal government in excess of \$100,000/yr. or a State contract in excess of \$25,000/yr. the company must maintain a drug free workplace. The company does not necessarily have to be certified, but that is the best way to prove compliance. The U.S. Dept. of Labor does have information on the Drug Free Workplace program on their Web site, but they make it quite complicated. The Georgia Council's folks have streamlined and simplified the process and customized it to comply with Georgia law.

It's my guess that your company is already doing virtually everything that

is required, or could do so very easily, but just hasn't applied for State certification. That certification qualifies the company for a State-mandated 7.5% discount on its workers compensation insurance; for GAWP that equates to an annual savings of about \$300. For your company, I'll bet the savings would be far greater. On top of all that, it's the right thing to do!

As you know, one of our biggest emerging challenges is the identification of trace amounts of pharmaceuticals in our source waters. As water professionals, we have a major role to play in educating the public...our customers...on proper means of disposing of prescription drugs in order to protect our water resources. In discussing this issue with the folks at the Council on Drugs and Alcohol, I've come to the alarming realization that old prescription drugs left lying around the house have become a major drug problem among young people, so their proper disposal is doubly important. I have just accepted an invitation from the Council to serve on their new Georgia Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Initiative Advisory Group, and I have committed to help them spread the word and to recruit our member organizations into the Georgia Drug Free Workplace Program. I would love to have a bunch of our key corporate member companies to point to as success stories. The program is easy to join, and membership is easy to maintain...and, as I said earlier, it's the right thing to do. 💧