Tips for Oil Spill Disaster Response Workers in Mobile County

Possible Signs of Alcohol and Substance Abuse

Oil spill disaster response work in the Gulf Coast is both physically and emotionally challenging. Exposure to environmental damage and difficult working conditions may lead to increased stress among many oil spill disaster response workers. Many workers were thankful for the income, but some persons were distressed about the change. Others workers felt that their pay should not be subtracted from their settlement money. Some may use alcohol or other drugs to cope. If you or one of your co-workers is using alcohol or drugs to cope with increased stress, talk to someone about ways to reduce or stop use. Help from professionals is also available. The warning signs listed in this brochure are often associated with alcohol or drug abuse and other physical or emotional problems. The list is not to be used as a substitute for a screening with a qualified healthcare provider. Alcohol or drug abuse will make it harder to get back up on your feet when things improve next spring. You can call 1-800-639-REBOUND to get help.

Warning Signs

The following warning signs are often associated with alcohol or drug abuse and other physical or emotional problems:

Physical/Emotional

- Has smell of alcohol on breath or marijuana on clothing
- Slurs speech or stutters; is incoherent
- Has dilated (enlarged) or constricted (pinpoint) pupils
- Has tremors (shaking or twitching of hands and eyelids)
- Appears lethargic or falls asleep easily
- Shows poor coordination or is unsteady (staggering, off balance)
- Speaks very rapidly or very slowly
- Has wide mood swings (highs and lows)
- Appears fearful or anxious; experiences panic attacks
- Appears impatient, agitated or irritable
- Is increasingly angry or defiant
- Is overly energetic

Personal Attitude/Behavior

- Talks about getting high
- Behaves in an impulsive or inappropriate manner
- Denies, lies or covers up
- Takes unnecessary risks or acts in a reckless manner
- Breaks or bends rules; cheats
- Misses work or appointments, or arrives intoxicated

Family Problems

- New conflicts with a spouse
- A new "short fuse" with the kids
- Withdrawing from family activities

Intellectual/Mental

- Has difficulty concentrating or focusing on the job
- Appears distracted or disoriented
- Makes poor or impulsive choices
- Has difficulty making decisions
- Experiences short-term memory loss
- Needs directions repeated frequently
- Has difficulty recalling known details
- Needs repeated assistance completing ordinary work forms
- Experiences blackouts

Project Rebound is a collaborative effort of state and local agencies to provide comprehensive behavioral health response to residents of Baldwin and Mobile counties who were impacted by the oil spill. Services include outreach, counseling, referral, public education, and resiliency building.

PROJECT REBOUND

1-800-639-REBOUND

Deaf or Hard of Hearing?

Please use the statewide relay system to contact Project Rebound: **711**

find us on the web @ www.mh.alabama.gov/projectrebound