



St. Louis Chapter Newsletter



In This Issue

- [Monthly Meeting Invite](#)
- [WISH WISE Event](#)
- [ASSP Governance](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- ["The End of Marijuana Testing?" - Bill Kincaid](#)
- [Safety and Health Conference - Oct 14th](#)
- [ASSP St. Louis PDC - November 15th](#)
- [Chapter Board Contacts](#)
- [Committee Chairs](#)

Important Links

- [Chapter Website](#)
- [Chapter Documents](#)
- [Current Job Postings](#)
- [Like Us on Facebook](#)
- [Follow us on Twitter](#)
- [Connect on LinkedIn](#)

Monthly Meeting



ASSP AND WISE OF ST. LOUIS PRESENT



ACTIVE SHOOTER IN THE WORK PLACE

October 11th, 2021
Syberg's on Dorsett



SPEAKER
Lt. Brian Hilke

Vice President of Strategy and
Training: Lead Instructor /
Certified Polygraph Examiner

Vista Law Enforcement, LLC.

REGISTRATION: 11:15 AM

LUNCH: 11:30 AM

PRESENTATION: NOON to 1 PM

Register



**Please join us either in person or over zoom
at our next monthly meeting on Oct 11th, 2021**

Register for In-Person: <https://stl.assp.org/events/october-lunch-meeting-tbd/>

Register for

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZArceihpj4tGdaXmHQFJmYFvwsffwVEWsUI>

Registration and Networking begin at 11:15

Lunch begins at 11:30am

Zoom meeting and presentation begin at 12:00

**In person location: Sybergs on Dorsett
2430 Old Dorsett Road, Maryland Heights, MO 63043**

Women in Safety Excellence Event

The Women in Safety Excellence St. Louis chapter met on September 9th. As a part of their meeting, they collected donation items for the Wildlife Rescue Center. Stay tuned for the next WISE Event soon.



ASSP Governance Proposal 2021

~from the St. Louis Chapter Board

Governance Update: The vote for this governance change was postponed during the meeting on the topic. The St. Louis board will continue to monitor and advocate for our members.

Upcoming Events

AIHA & ASSP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE (PDC)
November 15th, 2021
 7 am till 4 pm – more info to come
 Location French Gerleman, Westport

Bill McDonald – OSHA Area Director – St. Louis
 or Maryanne Martin – OSHA Compliance Assistance Specialist – St. Louis

Monthly Meeting – December 13th, 11:30 to 1 pm
 OSHA Update – Discussed will be the OSHA fiscal year update and quick review of New/Old initiatives.

Sybergs on Dorsett – IN PERSON

Are We Seeing the End of Pre-employment Marijuana Screening?

~Bill Kincaid, P.E., CSP, CIT

Someone from the HR department of a company I work with asked me about the ramifications of dropping the marijuana screen from their usual five panel pre-employment drug tests. Their feeling was they're eliminating a lot of otherwise suitable candidates from their employment pool.

After I looked up what "ramifications" means, I started down a rabbit hole of marijuana information. Drug testing is not my usual area, although like a lot of safety people I've recommended drug-free workplace policies. And, like a lot of people, I confess to having mixed feelings about loosening marijuana laws. But casual opinions aside, I can't claim to know much about the subject. What started off as an innocent question about lightening up on pre-employment marijuana tests turned into an epic journey into Marijuana Country.

If you aren't familiar with the status of marijuana laws, here's a quick lowdown. Marijuana is illegal under Federal law (although there are members of Congress trying to change that). Under Federal law, it is illegal to possess, transport, or use marijuana. Because Federal laws are limited in how they are enforced, states and municipalities have written their own laws regarding marijuana possession, sales, horticulture and so on. Non-Federal laws are the ones which most directly affect the citizens of the US, because those are the laws enforced by the local police, state troopers and sheriffs.

Despite the risk of trouble with the law, there have been millions of users willing to buy marijuana illegally from drug dealers and use it.

Anyone who has ever watched "COPS" has seen arrests which sprang from traffic stops which led to searches which led to the cops finding a tiny baggie of weed in some poor fellow's pocket. Two friends of mine who were former officers told me how it worked - they would see a car with people in it who fit a profile, stop the car for a burned-out taillight, window tints, cracked windshield or some other excuse, and then turn the stop into a search. If the search turned up some weed, it led to an arrest record and a stint in jail. The cops in some locales might even confiscate their car and cash. The traffic stop can take someone with a job and whose life is otherwise legit and give them an arrest record which makes it much harder for them to find a job and be productive citizens. They broke the local law, and that's the grim result.

In the past couple decades, though, we have seen marijuana laws being loosened across the nation. It's hard to be sure why, though knowing how things work in government it's possible legalization has been encouraged by a flow of lobbying money from companies aspiring to create a commercial marijuana

market, regardless of the various claimed benefits. In all states with legalized use, production and sales have also been legalized. That allows regulation of growers and control of the pesticides used on the plants. Plants which are found by state inspectors to test positive for unacceptable pesticides can't be legally sold. Chances are, these will go to illegal dealers unless confiscated and destroyed by the state.

Legalization has been a gradual process with increasing momentum. Marijuana laws for medical use were the first approved in some states, and then personal use was legalized in additional states. Some have only legalized CBD which is supposed to be a non-intoxicating extract which provides many claimed benefits without the high. As far as I can tell by furiously googling, there are now only FOUR states where marijuana is fully illegal.

Because it is still illegal at the Federal level, marijuana farmers, dispensaries and others involved in the trade can't do anything which involves interstate commerce. Marijuana sold in a state must be grown in that state. Using interstate banking, trucking, interstate sales and anything else which involves crossing state lines are illegal, because interstate commerce brings in Federal jurisdiction. This might be in flux, with Amazon and other interested parties pushing legislators to ease up on the Federal restrictions.

In Illinois, sale of recreational marijuana is fully legal. I drive past some Illinois dispensaries from time to time, and they seem to be drawing large crowds daily. Weed is very popular. In Missouri, medical marijuana is legal. To my understanding, it's very easy in most states to get a medical marijuana card. There are doctors who will run you through an online medical interview and have you authorized in a short time for medical marijuana in Missouri.

I know a guy who got his card because he told the doc at the medical marijuana card mill that he "had stress". Plus, he had the hundred bucks the doctor charged for the five-minute consultation. Just the same, Missouri's legislative body is being lobbied hard to legalize across the board.

Why have I included all this chatter about legalization? Because legalization, even partially, makes marijuana much more easily accessible. Accessibility means people will use more of it, and more people will use it. People who used to be hesitant about buying weed from some shady guy can now walk into a safe, legal dispensary and buy it from a salesclerk. They don't need to worry about the legal weed being contaminated by pesticides or laced with dangerous additives. Plus, legality allows law-respecting people who were concerned about getting the COPS treatment and acquiring a criminal record to feel at ease to try it and use it. This will no doubt include many working people in the labor candidate pool at a time when unemployment is so low that companies can't fill all their jobs. Legalization means more people who apply to work in our drug-free workplaces won't pass the drug test. That drags us into the picture, or at least many of the companies we work for.

A recent study showed that about 5% of employers are dropping the marijuana screening from their pre-employment criteria. Amazon is one of them, relaxing their marijuana policies for some job classifications to help keep their 1.3 million jobs filled. It's not exactly a major shift, although when giant companies like Amazon do it, eventually others will probably follow - except for safety-critical jobs where it's required by law such as truck driving.

It is possible when an employer becomes locally known for not testing for marijuana, they will become a magnet for candidates who can't pass a marijuana test. If the candidates have substance abuse problems, they will bring those problems to work, and that won't be a good thing. However, it could be an advantage in a tight labor pool - IF the candidates are the kind who can use a little now and then off-hours without it becoming a problem at work. My guess is this is true for most casual marijuana users, just like it is for alcohol.

One problem with workplace marijuana testing is it does not tell you if someone is using it to the extent it will lead to trouble. THC can be detected weeks after use, making it unique among the substances in the standard five panel test. Testing doesn't tell you whether an employee was impaired at the time of the test or even if they used the drug recently. Because a little occasional weekend use looks the same to the test as using it in the car on the way to work, in a sense it's more of a morality test than a useful indicator of whether someone will be a good, safe employee.

If the marijuana were taken out of the preemployment screening, it could still be used post-incident when it looks like intoxication was relevant to the accident. We can still have a policy to test post-incident

and take appropriate personnel actions if there's a positive result, despite the shortcomings of the test. We can't test everyone after every injury like we once could, though.

Even if someone has faithfully worked for us for years, we might drug test them after an accident when it looks like impairment might have been a factor. The tests we have today might show positive for marijuana, resulting in the termination of the employee, even when the employee hasn't used the drug for weeks. Again, it may be more of a morality test than a legitimate indication that impairment contributed to an accident. I know of some companies which have dropped the post-accident testing, at least for termination purposes.

We can also still have strict rules in place about not being under the influence of drugs and alcohol in the workplace and continue to make sure our supervisors are trained in observing behaviors for signs of impairment, and frequently emphasize supervisors should be watching safety-related behaviors, not just focusing on productivity.

We can even force those observations through accountability. For example, we can have a supervisor over forklift drivers observe one operator each day for some period and fill out a form which describes the observations and any actions taken as a result.

Given that testing for marijuana has never told us if our employees are coming to work stoned, legal marijuana or not, observations by trained supervisors have always been important. For a very long time, drug-free workplace programs have included giving supervisors "reasonable suspicion" training on identifying signs of impairment. Those observations were usually not pushed by management, but were relegated to "see something, say something" status. We were relying on testing to take the place of observations, but those tests really weren't so trustworthy where marijuana was concerned. We still want to test for the addictive substances in the standard panel, of course.

There was a time when my answer to a question about dropping marijuana from drug screens would have been automatic, maybe dogmatic. I would have said, "no way, you need to screen out the drug abusers before you hire them!" I'm sure a lot of safety people would have said the same thing. That was before marijuana was legal anywhere. The simple answer no longer fits a question which has become complicated. Now that marijuana is legalizing, maybe pre-employment marijuana screens could be dropped for jobs which aren't safety-critical without causing too much harm, if we can be diligent about not allowing impairment in the workplace.

~Bill

[Greater St. Louis Safety and Health Conference - Oct 14, 2021](#)

~ shared by Mary Beth Proost

[Register Now](#)

18TH ANNUAL GREATER ST. LOUIS SAFETY AND HEALTH CONFERENCE

Thursday, October 14, 2021
Saint Louis University
Busch Student Center

[ASSP St. Louis Chapter Professional Development Conference - Nov 15, 2021](#)

[Register Now](#)



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

PDC



**Monday
November 15th, 2021**

AT FRENCH GERLEMAN
2023 Westport Center Drive
St. Louis, Missouri 63146



7:30 am to 7:55 am	Registration at Customer Center
8:00 am to 8:30 am	WELCOME - ASSP / AIHA Update Steve Williams & Matt Orr
8:30 am to 8:45 am	BREAK w/SPONSORS & VENDORS
MISSISSIPPI ROOM	MISSOURI ROOM
Hearing Conservation Technologies 8:45 AM - 9:45 AM	WELDING - Health Hazards 8:45 AM - 9:45 AM
9:45 am to 10:15 am TRANSITION-BREAK w/SPONSORS & VENDORS	
BCSP & BGC Certifications 10:15 AM - 11:15 AM	WELDING - Air Monitoring 10:15 AM - 11:15 AM
11:30 to 12:30 pm LUNCH w/SPONSORS & VENDORS	
Medical Marijuana in Missouri - Law, Legal Trends and Policy 12:45 - 1:45 PM	WELDING - Controls Respirators/Local Exhaust 12:45 - 1:45 PM
1:45 pm to 2:00 pm TRANSITION-BREAK w/VENDORS	
Working in Extreme Temperatures (PANEL DISCUSSION) 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	WELDING - Anticipate & Evaluate 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM
3:00 pm to 3:15 pm TRANSITION-BREAK w/VENDORS	
3:15 pm to 4:15 pm MISSISSIPPI ROOM	Regulatory Update (OSHA & EPA) Bill McDonald or Maryanne Martin OSHA - St. Louis Area Office CLOSING REMARKS
ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE	
	

St. Louis Chapter Executive Board Contacts

- President** - Steve Williams - swilliams@frenchgerleman.com
- Vice President** - Dennis Pivin - DPivin@aegion.com
- Secretary** - Nate Richardson - nate.richardson.safety@gmail.com
- Treasurer** - Mae Patrick - stlassptreas20@att.net

Past President - Rick Reams - ricky_reams@hotmail.com

Mid-Missouri Section Officers

President - Mark Woodward - mwoodwar@mem-ins.com

Vice President - Paul Krewson - paul@peakergo.com

Secretary/Treasurer - David Attebery - david.attebery@labor.mo.gov

Chapter Committee Chairs

Website – Dave Callies – dcallies@kelpe.com

Maintains website with updated news, chapter events, and job postings

PDC Chair – Dennis Pivin – DPivin@aegion.com

Coordinates logistics of professional development activities

Membership – Dianne Gibbs – dianne@ideasftp.com

Ensures new members are recognized & introduced at membership meetings

Public Relations – Steve Williams – swilliams@bellelectrical.com

Promotes chapter activities to the general public. Coordinates poster contest

Newsletter – Dan Bembower – dan.bembower@usi.com

Publishes and distributes the chapter newsletter to all chapter members

Awards & Honors – Bill Kincaid – billkincaid@yahoo.com

Recognizes member achievement through chapter awards

Scholarship – Rob Miller – robertmiller91@yahoo.com

Promotes student scholarships & continuing education scholarships for members

Golf Scholarship

Jesse Taborsky – jesse.taborsky@crbusa.com

Nick Zahner – nzahner@murphynet.com

Organizes and runs the annual golf tournament supporting local safety focused students

Programs – Tim Michel – tmichel@keeleycompanies.com

Plans the program time and needs for presentations & coordinates schedule

Social Media – JaNola Rigsby – jrigsby@qualsafesolutions.com

Maintains Face book & Twitter accounts promoting discussion with local membership

Women In Safety Excellence (WISE) Coordinators

JaNola Rigsby – jrigsby@qualsafesolutions.com

Patte Ackermann, PT – ackermap@ssm-select.com

Organizes the WISH events to promote the community of women in Safety & Health

Please contact a board member or committee chair with comments or if you would like to participate in any of the chapter activities.

If you do not wish to receive these emails, please [click here](#)
to unsubscribe from ASSP St. Louis Chapter messages.