

Through the years the legal profession has had more and more influence on our society. Today it seems that people take less and less responsibility for their actions and would rather take their chances in court with a lawyer at their side. All businesses are so careful to avoid a law suit that employees are treated less and less like people. A few years ago if an employer would suspect an employee of using drugs they would offer assistance and hold their job until they were able to straighten out their lives. Today if someone is suspected of drug use all the employees may be subjected to drug tests so as not to single out the person with the problem.

This situation has occurred in the office that I work in. One of the supervisors, who happens to be incompetent, is a recovering alcoholic. Over the past eight years she has hired five other recovering alcoholics that are roughly her age. Three of the people are very diligent about their recovery. They are very cut and dry about their feelings towards drinking. You either are recovering or you have a problem. One of these individuals has been promoted to a lead worker position. She has taken it upon herself to confront another worker about her drinking habits on the weekends. This employee became so angry that she went to the union and complained. Once the talks between the management team and the union ended it was announced that all employees would need to submit to drug tests at the employer's request. There is a very vague criterion that constitutes the reasons behind the request. Basically if they want you to take drug tests you need to do it. Refusal to take part in the drug tests is an assumption that you have been using or drinking.

Not only is it embarrassing to be asked to take drug tests, but all employees had to fill out a form that lists all prescription drugs that they are taking, so they can be ruled out in the toxicology screens. I feel this is a huge invasion of the individual's privacy. This is the same as revealing everyone's medical records to the employer. The drug tests have disrupted the relationships between employees and management. The union is trying to fight for the rights of the employees, but in the mean time we all need to report our prescription drugs and take the drug tests upon request.