



2022 Drug Testing Index® Spotlight

Construction Industry



2022

Drug Testing Index® spotlight

A focused analysis of workforce drug use data and trends in your industry

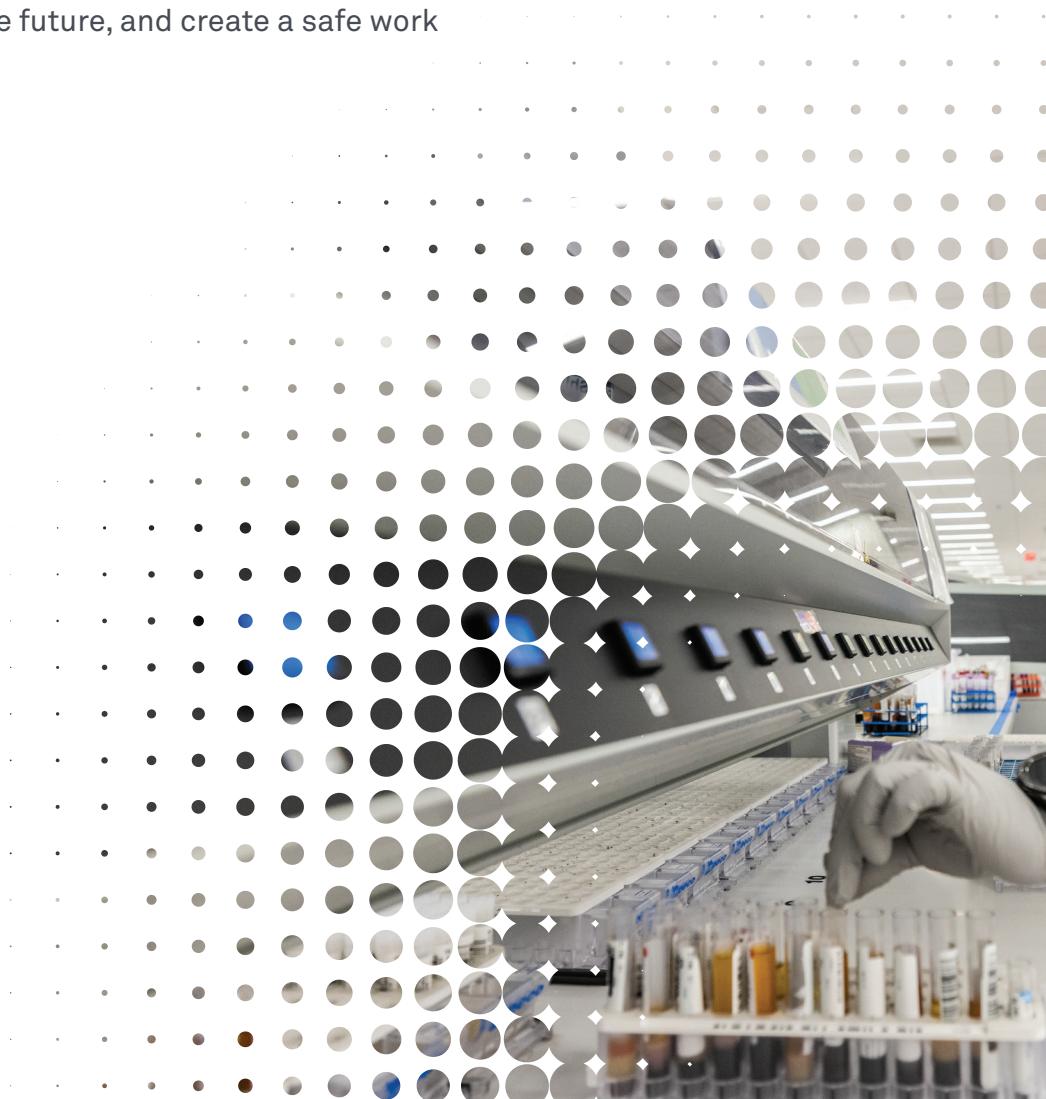
Since 1988, Quest Diagnostics® has leveraged the nationwide data from our forensic toxicology labs to publish the Drug Testing Index® (DTI), an annual report examining drug positivity rates of specimens tested on behalf of employers across the country.

The 2022 DTI compiles data from more than 11 million deidentified urine, hair, and oral fluid drug test results collected between January and December 2021. This year's report reveals relevant insights into patterns of drug use among American workers as companies grapple with an ever-evolving labor market—and an ongoing recruitment and retention crisis—in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We invite you to review both the cross-industry and industry-specific data captured in this DTI spotlight, and to use the information as you continue to reduce risk, plan for the future, and create a safe work environment for your employees.

DTI data reported in:

The Wall Street Journal
Barron's
Axios
CNBC
Fox Business
NPR Marketplace



The upshot

US workforce drug use rates reach 20-year peak

The past 5 years have seen a sharp rise in America's workforce drug use in 16 of the 17 industries tracked by Quest. 2021 continued that trend, reaching the highest rate of positive drug test results since 2001—up more than 30% in the combined US workforce from an all-time low in 2010-2012.

“Our Drug Testing Index reveals several notable trends, including increased drug positivity rates in the safety-sensitive workforce responsible for keeping society safe, as well as higher rates of positivity in individuals tested after on-the-job accidents.”

Barry Sample, PhD
Senior Science Consultant for
Quest Diagnostics

Adapting drug testing strategies to address shifting trends

As workforce drug use continues to increase, so does your risk as an employer. Consider updating your company's drug-free workplace program to meet the moment and match current drug use patterns. In addition, conducting specific post-accident drug testing can help you learn why workplace accidents happen—so you can maintain a safe environment for employees.



30%

year-over-year increase in positive drug test results

(combined US workforce since 2012)

General workforce positivity

Pre-employment ▲ 17.4%

Post-accident ▲ 26%

(vs 2017)

Safety-sensitive workforce positivity

Pre-employment ▲ 9.5%

Post-accident ▲ 41.9%

(vs 2017)

Not all drugs are used equally

Over the past 5 years, positivity rates are up for some drugs and down for others:

Marijuana ▲ 50%

Amphetamine ▲ 8.3%

Methamphetamine ▼ 11.1%

Cocaine ▼ 30%

Opiates ▼ 56.4%

(national averages across all industries vs 2017)

The down-low

Post-accident positivity rates steadily climb

The correlation between drug use and workplace safety is clearer than ever as positivity rates for post-accident urine tests among the general US workforce increased over the past 5 years.

A changing national environment for marijuana

In 2021, marijuana positivity rates in the general US workforce rose to 3.9%, the highest ever reported in the DTI. Considering many states have recently changed laws regarding medical marijuana, recreational marijuana, and Low THC/High CBD, it's no surprise that positivity increased across industries—highlighting the potential need for companies to reexamine how marijuana is handled in the workplace.



Urine test positivity rate after workplace accidents

- ▲ **26% for all post-accident testing from 2017 to 2021**
- ▲ **59.5% for post-accident marijuana testing from 2017 to 2021**

General workforce marijuana positivity

- ▲ **50% over the past 5 years**



2021
3.9%



2017
2.6%

Cannabis use at work

Percentage of workers who report seeing coworkers use cannabis:



45%¹
Construction



32%¹
Manufacturing



30%¹
Transportation

Construction

Building a bigger and more diverse workforce

The construction industry is facing a critical post-pandemic challenge: navigating significant workforce growth at the same time as a substantial shift in employee demographics. As thousands of construction laborers retire or change careers, many others are now entering an industry that's quickly growing thanks to an oncoming wave of infrastructure projects created with \$550 billion in new government funding.²

At the foundation of it all is a drive for more diversity.

As 167,800 new entrants join the field each year through 2030³, industry-wide recruitment diversity efforts are generating deserved opportunities for underrepresented groups. For larger firms with private projects and smaller businesses seeking to scale up, the competition to attract these employees—including minorities, women, and often younger workers—will be fierce.

Growing focus on workers, growing pressure on workforce drug testing

As the construction industry continues to grow, attracting new employees remains a constant battle for many companies. That hiring process is made even more difficult when workforce drug use is very high, as it is currently. A potential employee's dependability and trustworthiness naturally rise to the top of the qualifications list. That's why it's critical to deliver a drug testing experience that respects job candidates and helps to keep workplaces safe.



Key industry stats

Employees⁴

7,623,000

(as of April 2022)

Unemployment rate⁴

4.6%

April 2022

16.6%

April 2020

Bringing it home



17.7%⁵

labor growth rate for residential building construction through 2030, far higher than non-residential (11.5%)

Workplace safety at risk



64.3%⁶

of all fatal accidents in 2019—709 deaths total—were attributed to the “Construction Focus Four” hazards defined by OSHA, despite ongoing workplace safety initiatives

Construction

A clear need for comprehensive drug testing

Finding qualified employees has always been an arduous task. Yet the demands of today's workforce has made hiring and retaining workers an increasingly complex concern for many companies. Especially as the construction industry aims to increase diversity while meeting steep hiring goals.

With tens of thousands of new entrants in the field every year³, workforce drug testing can play a key role in ensuring safety at construction sites while also enhancing recruitment and retention. Consider that a potential employee's drug screening may be their first experience with your company. Or that workers may need to be tested frequently when moving from site to site to hit deadlines. It's essential that drug testing is simple, seamless, and scalable. Yet many companies haven't adapted their testing programs to the changing realities of the industry.

Review the construction industry's drug positivity data to the right and on the following pages to see why evolving your drug testing program is so critical.

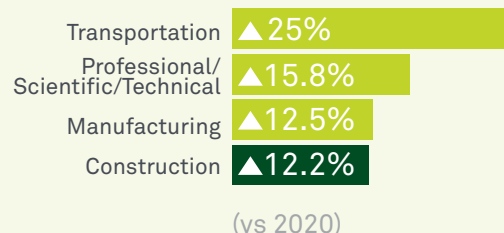
A closer look

While positivity rates for marijuana increased dramatically—most likely due to changing state laws and shifting national perceptions—amphetamine positivity rates also jumped in 2021, while other drug usage declined.



2021 construction industry drug use trends

Workforce positivity



Not all drugs are used equally

Compared to last year, positivity rates are up for some drugs and down for others:

Marijuana ▲ 16%
Amphetamine ▲ 9%

Methamphetamine ▼ 5%
Cocaine ▼ 6%
Opiates ▼ 24%

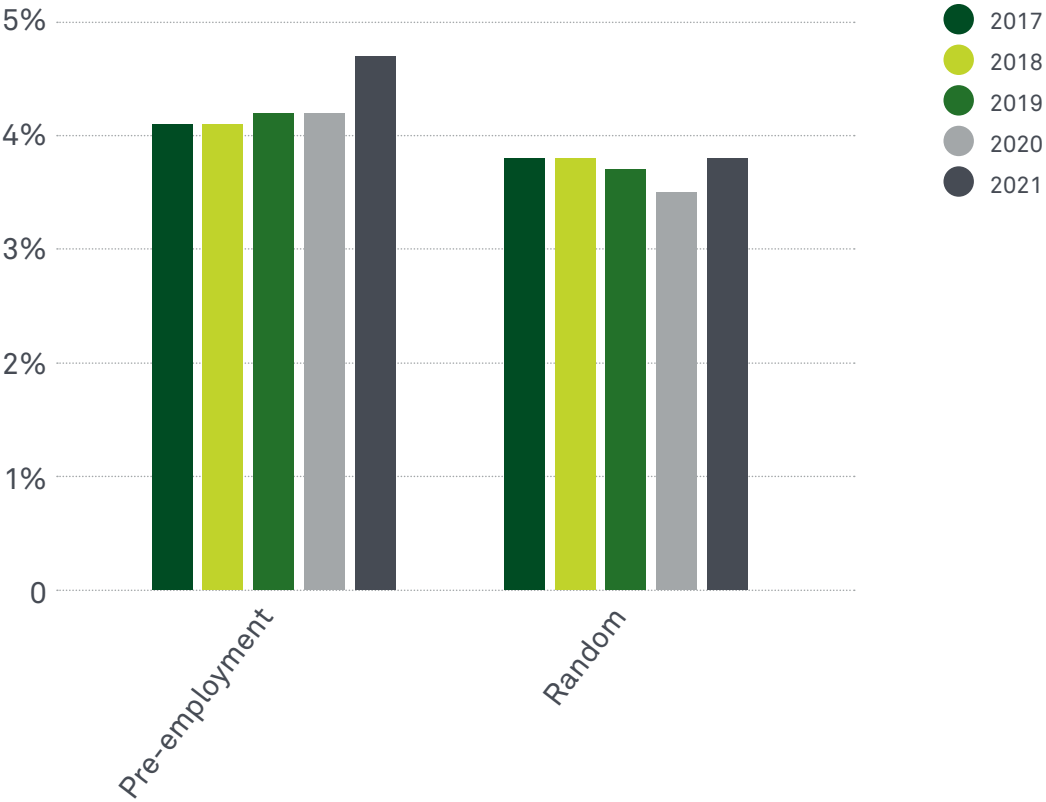
(construction industry averages vs 2020)

A slippery slope

Comparing construction workforce positivity from 2017 to 2021

Positivity by reason

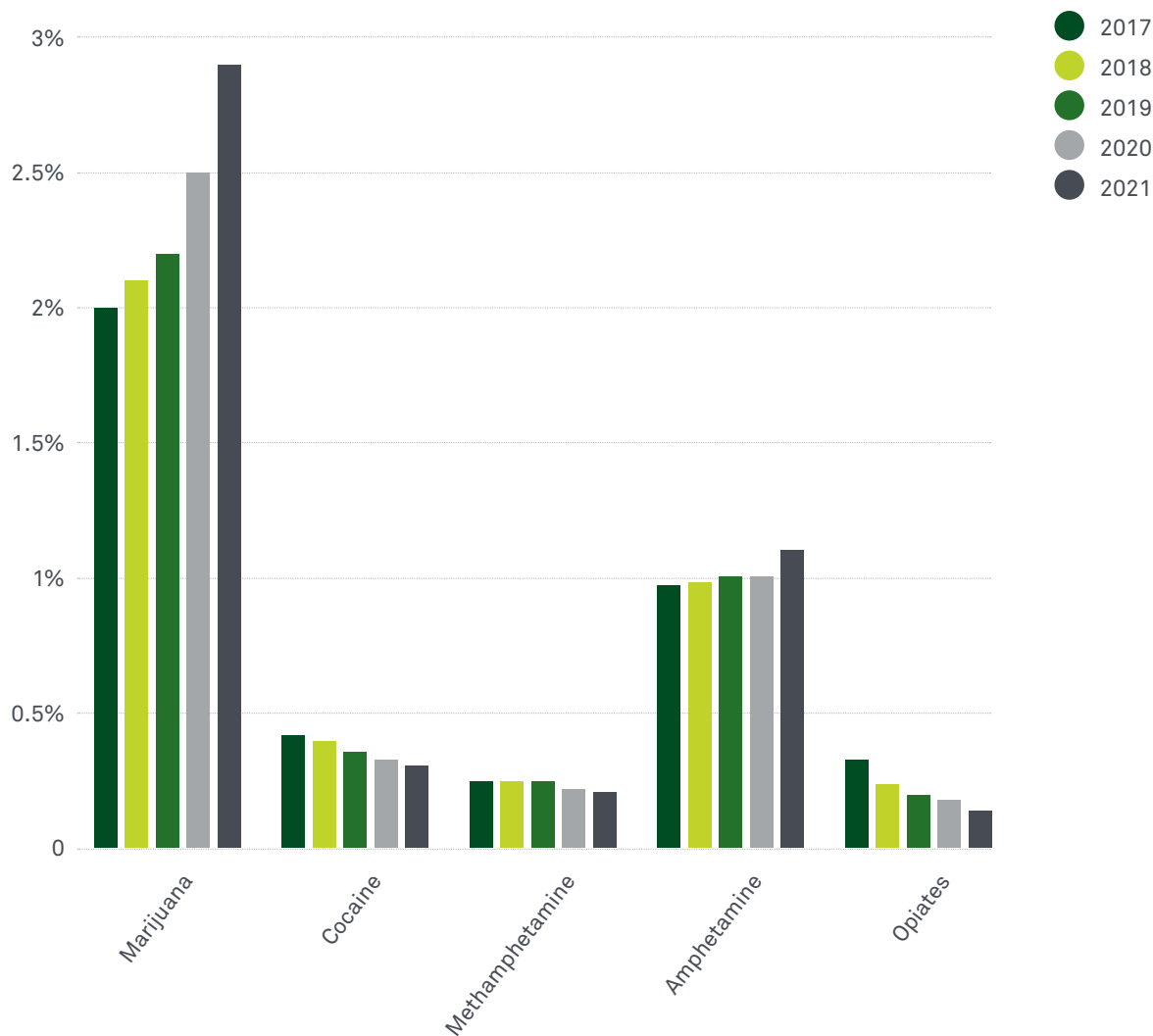
Pre-employment ▲ 14.6%
Random (no change)
(vs 2017)



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Pre-employment	4.1%	4.1%	4.2%	4.2%	4.7%
Random	3.8%	3.8%	3.7%	3.5%	3.8%

Comparing construction workforce positivity from 2017 to 2021

Positivity by drug



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Marijuana	2.0%	2.1%	2.2%	2.5%	2.9%
Cocaine	0.41%	0.39%	0.35%	0.32%	0.30%
Methamphetamine	0.24%	0.24%	0.24%	0.21%	0.20%
Amphetamine	0.97%	0.98%	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%
Opiates	0.32%	0.23%	0.19%	0.17%	0.13%



How comprehensive drug testing can help you keep up

If the 2022 DTI has taught us anything, it's that workplace drug use continues to change with the times, no matter the industry. As companies like yours face rising challenges in recruiting, retaining, and growing staff, you can't afford to compromise on workforce drug testing.

Quest Diagnostics delivers accurate, accessible drug testing solutions you can depend on—including a full range of testing types and fast, reliable instant testing—to maintain safety and compliance while ensuring confidence in the results.

When you partner with Quest, we'll leverage data-driven insights and cross-industry experience to help you develop a drug testing program that fits your needs, protects your reputation, and empowers you to build and manage a workforce that will safely complete jobs on time.

Want to learn more?

Visit the Quest Construction Industry Employer Hub at drugtest.questdiagnostics.com/construction

Ready to meet?

Start the conversation about your drug testing needs at questdiagnostics.com/letstalkdrugtesting



References

Source for all data not cited:

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