

# Wellness Pays

Partnership for A Healthy Business Community

Enhancing the health, productivity, and quality of work life  
for small business leaders, their employees, and their communities



Spring 2004

## Workplace Wellness Pays for Ed Wilson Civil Division



One small business realized that workplace wellness pays off. The Small Business Wellness Initiative recognized Ed A. Wilson Civil Division with the **Workplace Wellness Partner Award**, given to the small business in each county with the highest percentage of participation in the wellness study.

Ed A. Wilson Civil Division, a general contracting firm, will receive \$500 to use toward a company picnic or other employee benefit. The firm was one of 44 companies in Tarrant, Dallas and Denton counties that have participated in the Small Business Wellness Initiative, a research study funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"We very much appreciate the professional and energetic assistance that we have received, not only to minimize drug use in the workplace but to enhance the overall health and safety culture of our firm," said Knox Ross, division manager of Ed A. Wilson Civil Division. "We

recommend the Wellness Initiative to any small to medium sized business in the Metroplex that wants to optimize their most important asset--their workforce."

## New Year, New Goals

The beginning of a new year brings with it a prime opportunity to make a change. Maybe you have been wanting to spend more time with family, reduce stress, work less, eat healthier, exercise more or quit smoking. Regardless of what change you want to make, there's no better time than now to make it. However, change is never easy. Here are some tips to help you make new year goals and achieve them.

### Set Goals

Decide what you want to achieve this year and write it down. Be specific. Set challenging, yet reasonable, goals for yourself. If your goal is too easy, you may not be motivated to achieve it. If your goal seems too difficult, you may give up easily. Your goals should also be measurable. It will be easier to see your progress if your goals are measurable. Measure how you are doing against your goals throughout the year, and adjust as necessary.

### Make a Plan

Once you have established your goals, try to break them down. Determine how you can make even small changes in your life. Write down steps you can take toward achieving your goals. You do not have to make a complicated plan; just brainstorm (continued on page 2)



## New Year, New Goals

(continued from page 1)

enough ideas to give you a place to start. Do not try to do it all at once.

### Seek Resources and Support

Find out if anyone else around you shares your goals. Maybe your co-worker is also trying to quit smoking. Use one another as a support system. Get your family and friends involved in your change. Non-profit or community agencies may also have resources available that can assist you in achieving your goals.

### Rewards

Remember, change is a process. Establish rewards for yourself for each success. Do not wait until next year to look at your goals and see what you achieved or where you failed. Do this at all the measurement points you built into your plan.



### Top 10 Most Common New Year Resolutions

1. Lose weight
2. Stop smoking
3. Stick to a budget
4. Save or earn more money
5. Find a better job
6. Become more organized
7. Exercise more
8. Be more patient at with others
9. Eat better
10. Be a better person

Source: [www.GoalsGuy.com](http://www.GoalsGuy.com)



The mission of the Small Business Wellness Initiative is to enhance the health, productivity and work life of small business owners, their employees and their communities.

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The Small Business Wellness Initiative (SBWI), a community collaboration funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, supports small businesses in their desire to create a healthy and profitable business by improving the overall health and productivity of their employees through scientifically proven wellness programs. Community partners include Tarrant Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse, the North Texas Small Business Development Center and Organizational Wellness and Learning Systems.

## Wellness Study Concludes Training Initial Research Yields Positive Results

In December, the Small Business Wellness Initiative concluded its complimentary wellness training as part of the wellness study. Over 40 businesses participated in the study.

Initial research has shown that employees in the businesses that received the wellness training improved their ability to deal with stress. Employees who received training were significantly more likely to increase healthy stress unwinding behaviors (e.g., exercise, meditation, socializing) as compared with other conditions. They were also more likely to seek help for stress problems for themselves or for family members following training. These attitude and positive lifestyle changes are significant protective factors for substance abuse.

Final research results from the study, which will determine the long-term effectiveness of health promotion and stress management programs on employees' overall health and wellness, will be released in September 2004.

## How Much Does Your Company Pay for Alcohol Abuse?

How much does your company pay for alcohol abuse? It may sound like a silly question. However, if you think your company doesn't pay for alcohol abuse, think again. Government statistics show that over 75 percent of heavy drinkers are employed. If your business employs at least 8 workers, there is a likely chance that your company is affected by the problems and costs associated with alcohol abuse.

Employees who have a problem with alcohol cost businesses through absenteeism, productivity, workers' compensation and health insurance. Alcohol abuse costs American businesses about \$134 billion in productivity losses nationally each year. Alcoholics and problem drinkers are absent from work 4 to 8 times more often than normal employees. When they do show up, substance abusers are 33 percent less productive. Furthermore, up to 40 percent of industrial fatalities can be linked to alcohol abuse. Between 38 and 50 percent of all workers' compensation claims are related to substance abuse. Substance abusers are also three times more likely to use medical benefits than other employees.

A company's cost for alcohol abuse increases for industries with a high risk of substance abuse, such as the construction, transportation and service industries. You can calculate your company's costs for alcohol abuse at [www.alcoholcostcalculator.com](http://www.alcoholcostcalculator.com). There are ways you can help your employees and reduce your costs of alcoholism in your workplace.

Your company can:

- Provide confidential alcohol screenings for all employees. Offer brief intervention services for individuals who are not yet dependent on alcohol.
- Offer health insurance coverage to treat alcoholism the same way that other chronic illnesses are treated.
- Set up or strengthen your company's Employee Assistance Program(EAP) to actively identify and assist people with alcohol and drinking problems.



### Alcohol Abuse = \$\$\$ Lost

#### \$683 billion

Alcohol-related problems cost every man, woman and child in American roughly \$683 each year. The cost of alcohol problems includes lost productivity, health care expenditures, alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes and alcohol-related crime.

#### \$134 billion

Alcohol costs American business about \$134 billion in productivity losses nationally.

#### \$26 billion

According to government estimates, alcohol problems add \$26 billion to the nation's health care bill.

Source: Ensuring Solutions to Alcohol Problems 2003.  
[www.alcoholcostcalculator.com](http://www.alcoholcostcalculator.com)



### Prevention Resources

Contact Small Business Wellness Initiative community partners for prevention resources that can help save your company money on alcohol abuse.

#### Tarrant Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse

Offers assessments, alcohol and drug education, supervisor training and policy development  
[www.tarrantcouncil.org](http://www.tarrantcouncil.org)  
(817) 332-6329

#### North Texas Small Business Development Center

Provides drug-free workplace workshops and program development assistance  
[www.ntsfdc.org](http://www.ntsfdc.org)  
(214) 860-5831  
1-800-350-SBDC (7232)

#### Organizational Wellness & Learning Systems

Provides consultation, workshops and customized programs in health promotion  
[www.organizationalwellness.com](http://www.organizationalwellness.com)  
(817) 921-4260

## Get With The Program That Pays

Over 40 businesses participated in the wellness study conducted by the Small Business Wellness Initiative. As part of the study, SBWI has provided complimentary wellness training to over 830 employees in Tarrant, Dallas and Denton counties in the last two years.

Here's What Participating Companies Said:

*"Definitely a great resource for businesses. It brings awareness to subjects that are hard to confront."*

— **Puente Concessions**

*"Excellent, very informative. Helped our employees."*

— **Rebar Service & Supply**

*"Wise teachers made learning a joy. You helped us save money."*

— **Ed A. Wilson Inc.**

*"The training helped employees as parents."*

— **Allied Drilling**

## Share Your Success

Did our wellness training help an employee? Tell us how our wellness training helped an employee or saved your business money.

Share your success story with us. We need you to tell other businesses about the value in a workplace wellness program. Your company could be featured in our next newsletter.

Please send your success story to Roxanne Martinez at [r.martinez@tarrantcouncil.org](mailto:r.martinez@tarrantcouncil.org), by fax at (817) 332-2828 or mail to: Small Business Wellness Initiative, 1701 W. Freeway, Suite 1, Fort Worth, TX 76102.



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