

Workplace Wellbeing Hub

Toolbox Talk: Encouraging Employees to Use EAP and Mental Health Benefits

Duration: 5 minutes

Audience: Field crews, supervisors, trades, operators, shift workers

Purpose: Increase awareness and use of Employee Assistance Programs, mental health coverage and available support.

Today we want to talk briefly about one of the support resources available to our workforce that not everyone takes advantage of, our Employee Assistance Program, or EAP. Our workplace offers EAP and mental health benefits to all employees, yet many people never use them because they are unsure what the program provides or worry that reaching out could reflect poorly on them.

We want to be clear that EAP services are confidential, paid for by the company, and designed to support you with real-life concerns such as stress, family responsibilities, financial challenges, substance use issues, grief, or other situations that can affect your wellbeing and safety at work. When we are dealing with personal stress or challenges outside of work, it can impact our sleep, mood, focus, and decision-making on the job, which can increase the risk of incidents, near misses, or injuries.

The EAP helps you all get support early, before small problems become bigger ones, and often includes short-term counseling, help finding resources, or referrals for longer-term care if needed. We also want to reinforce that using the EAP is private, and supervisors are not told why someone contacts the program or what is discussed. Participation does not go into personnel files.

Different roles in our organization come with different challenges, whether it is demanding schedules, physical strain, long hours, time away from home, or sleep disruption, and the EAP is there to support you no matter the role or situation. Reminding ourselves where to find the hotline number, looking for posted flyers, and keeping this resource in mind can make it easier to use when it is needed, and we encourage anyone who may benefit from support to reach out without hesitation. Using our EAP is simply another way we take care of our health, support one another, and help maintain a safer, stronger workplace for everyone.

Quick tip:

The EAP is not just for crises. The EAP is here for everyday challenges too – stress, financial questions, relationship concerns, sleep issues and parenting support all qualify. You don't have to wait for a problem to become serious to reach out.

Quick crew activity (1 minute)

Ask the group:

"Without sharing details, has anyone ever tried the EAP or another support service and found it helpful?"

(If no one volunteers, the supervisor can share a general example or hypothetical.)