European employee drug testing guidelines updated.

The European Workplace Drug Testing Society (EWDTS) has recently updated guidelines for urine, oral fluid and hair drug testing.

The updated guidelines have been circulated to EWDTS members for comment and feedback and the final versions will be ratified at the EWDTS’s board meeting in London in September.

Drawing attention to the publication of the guidelines, Maurice Quinlan, director of the EAP Institute mentions that the Irish Health and Safety Authority (HSA), in its *Intoxicants at Work Information Sheet*, recommends that drug testing is carried out in accordance with a recognised standard, such as the EWDTS’s guidelines. The guidelines have, he says, been recognised by the Labour Court in the case of an employee versus Alstom.

Saying that ten years after the SHWW Act 2005, provided for the introduction of regulations on drug testing, Mr Quinlan, who said that employers are confused and uncertain in the absence of guidelines on how to deal with employees who report under the influence of drugs and alcohol, suggested the HSA might adopt the EWDTS guidelines as the basis for a code of practice.

The purpose of the guidelines, as explained by the toxicologist, Anya Pierce, a former member of the EWDTS board, when she spoke at the EAP Institute annual conference in 2002 is to: provide a minimum set of criteria for the providers of workplace drug testing services in Europe; ensure that the processes undertaken are capable of withstanding legal scrutiny; protect specimen donors; and define for laboratories common quality assurance and quality controls that are capable of being accredited by an external body.

To access the guidelines visit the EWDTS website [www.ewdts.org](http://www.ewdts.org).

For further information contact:

Maurice Quinlan,
Director,
EAP Institute
143 Barrack St.,
Waterford.
Tel: 051 855 733
Email: Maurice@eapinstitute.com
[www.eapinstitute.com](http://www.eapinstitute.com)