

# Board Converting News

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## In Canada, Marijuana Law Drives 'Fit For Work Policy'

by Allen Kirkpatrick

The Canadian government is committed to legalizing marijuana later this year and the changes will soon be here — and this will cause a shift in managing employees. The Canadian Corrugated & Containerboard Association (CCCA) recently reviewed and discussed these issues at a meeting of the Human Resources Committee. Mitchel-Lincoln hosted the meeting



at their Saint-Laurent head office with a video connection set up in the conference room of Atlantic Packaging in Brampton, Ontario.

Catherine Pronovost, a Senior Associate from the legal firm of Norton Rose Fulbright, led the discussion

will be required for the sale of marijuana and the sale or promotion to minors if forbidden. Various provincial laws will restrict smoking marijuana in public places.

So, what do we do in our plants and offices? Marijuana can directly impact a person's ability to work safely and can impact productivity. Legalization of recreational use does not allow employees to work while impaired. Employees have an obligation to report to work fit for duty and employers are required to provide a safe work environment.

The days of testing for drug or alcohol use are behind us. Testing is considered a personal intrusion and there are few practical tests when it comes to marijuana. Pronovost encourages that "it's time to shift the focus to impairment rather than testing." Impairment surveillance requires a supervisor to "pay attention to behavior and attitude" and this aligns with the "Fit to Work Policy."

A thorough review of your current policy is recommended where all causes for impairment are targeted. Generate input from employee work groups and unions to shift the focus to an obligation to report fit for work. Then proceed to train employees, supervisors, and managers so everyone is better prepared to handle incidents of all kinds. Make change a good positive thing in your business.

*Allen Kirkpatrick is Executive Director of the Canadian Corrugated & Containerboard Association (CCCA) in Brampton, Ontario.*



for the group to provide a legal, political and corporate framework. Following passage of the federal law an adult may legally possess up to 30 grams of marijuana. A permit similar to the requirement to sell alcohol