



Drink Spiking – Date Rape Drugs

CAGC INFORMATION ALERT

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Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors

1045, 1015 - 4th Street SW

Calgary, Alberta

T2R 1J4

Phone: 403 265 0045

Fax: 403 265 0025

E-mail: info@cagc.ca

Information Alert

10-05

A serious hazard to all employees (field and office), has recently come to our attention. "Date Rape" type drugs are being used by way of spiking drinks to conduct personal theft or potentially other serious offences. These drugs, more formally known as Rohypnol and GHB, are known to induce memory loss, loss of inhibitions and other mind altering effects. Characteristics of this type of illegal doping may include individuals acting outside their normal personality and indulging in behaviours and acts outside of the normal for an individual. Reaction to a doping generally begins to occur within 30 minutes of receiving the drug and will last up to six to eight hours (during this period, complete memory is lost) after which time the individual will generally lose consciousness until awoken the next day with signs of extreme fatigue, headache, possible nausea and an inability to urinate. This hazard poses serious risk to all personnel, especially those observed after hours in communities where we work and those who are deemed to potentially possess large sums of money (i.e. hotshot, following payday). If you observe someone who you suspect may have been a victim or believe you may have been victimized yourself, you should immediately proceed to a local health care center for urinalysis (this is the only way to identify this drug type) and medical examination as the effects of drugging can remain in your system for as little as twelve hours.

In order to raise awareness, educate our members and families and to prevent similar cases from occurring, the following action items are recommended:

1. Hold a safety meetings as soon as possible to discuss this alert
2. Add this topic to "off-the-job safety" section of your safety program
3. Include this topic in your General & Site Orientation
 - a. (Sub topics)
 - i. Drinking & Driving

Hours of Rest required (Alberta & BC)

Important Facts on Drink Spiking

- The most common "date rape" drugs are **Rohypnol** and **GHB**;
- Effects include loss of inhibition, extreme sleepiness, relaxation, and amnesia (obviously very dangerous!);
- It is **illegal** in Canada and the United States;
- The dime-sized pill is odourless, tasteless, colourless and dissolves easily in alcohol and soft drinks;
- Rohypnol is similar to Valium but is 10 times more powerful;

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- A two-milligram dose of Rohypnol when added to one beer can result in a person not remembering events in the past 8 hours, despite sensing that something disturbing may have happened;
- All traces of the pill are usually eliminated from the body in as little as twenty-four hours;
- "Date rape" drugs can only be detected through urinalysis;
- Within 10 to 30 minutes of ingesting these drugs, victims may experience:
 - Dizziness and/or disorientation;
 - Hot or cold flashes;
 - Nausea;
 - Difficulty moving;
 - Difficulty speaking;
 - Agitated;
 - Black out
- Victims often have no memory of the abuse that occurred while under the influence of these drugs.

Effects of "Date Rape" Drugs

Effects begin within 30 minutes, peak within 2 hours, and can persist for up to 8 hours.

- Aggressive behavior;
- Blackouts (may last from 8 to 24 hours);
- Confusion;
- Decreased blood pressure;
- Difficulty breathing;
- Dizziness;
- Drowsiness;
- Impaired judgment;
- Impaired memory;
- Impaired motor skills;

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- Increased vulnerability to sexual attack/assault;
- Infrequent urination;
- Lack of awareness of attack/assault;
- Loss or reduction of an inhibition;
- Stomach problems;
- Visual disturbances

Withdrawal Symptoms

- Anxiety;
- Confusion;
- Convulsions;
- Hallucinations;
- Severe Headache;
- Insomnia;
- Muscle pain;
- Seizures;
- Sweating;
- Tremors

Safety Tips: Avoid Becoming A Victim Of "Date Rape" Drugs

- Do not accept drinks from anyone you do not know well and trust;
- If you accept a drink, make sure it is from an unopened container and that you open it yourself;
- Do not put your drink down or leave it unattended;
- Warn others of the effects of these dangerous drugs;
- If you think that you have been a victim, notify the police immediately;
- Never, under any circumstances, leave a friend who is displaying the effects of a "date rape" drug;

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- Beverages in punch bowls can be easily contaminated with “date rape” drugs and therefore should be avoided;
- If you or someone you know has ingested a "date rape" drug, go to a hospital emergency room immediately;
- If the person falls unconscious, lay the person on his/her side to avoid the possibility of choking. Make sure the person’s air passage is clear and that the chin is not pressed against the chest;
- Practice the buddy system, and take care of your friends.

You Might Be A Victim Of Date Rape Drugs If:

- You feel more drunk than usual, or you have an unusual response to the amount of alcohol you've consumed;
- You wake up very hung over, with a "fuzzy" feeling and memory lapse;
- You suspect someone sexually assaulted you, but you can't remember the incident fully (there have been instances of women being aware of what was happening, but just couldn't move);
- You remember taking a drink but can't recall the period after you consumed the drink

If you suspect that you have been a victim of Rohypnol or GHB, try to stay calm, and get help immediately.

- Get to a safe place;
- Get help immediately by phoning the police and obtaining medical care;
- Have a trusted friend stay with you and take care of you;
- Go to the hospital emergency room as soon as possible for an exam and evidence collection;
- Preserve as much physical evidence as possible. Keep your clothes and yourself unwashed, if possible. Try to get the glass or the bottle you drank from.
- Request that the hospital take a urine sample for drug toxicology testing at a police laboratory. **Only a special test can detect Rohypnol and GHB;**
- Remember that Rohypnol & GHB are eliminated from the body very quickly... you need to be tested as soon as possible!