

# Alternative Corrections Programs Benefit from the Sentinel™ Automatic Alcohol Screening Station

By: Nicola Grun

**Lifeloc**  
TECHNOLOGIES

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Recently my travels took me to Weld County Work Release Center, Colorado, a corrections facility that has embraced new approaches to dealing with the administrative, workload and cost challenges of court ordered breath alcohol testing. A recently deployed automated breath alcohol screening solution from Lifeloc Technologies has significantly streamlined operations and reduced costs.

### Background

Work Release programs offer alcohol offenders an alternative to incarceration. In Weld County, Colorado enrollees are required to complete a breath test each time they enter the program center. A positive alcohol test can result in jail time.

As clients travel back and forth to work and other outside appointments they can receive up to four breath tests a day per enrollee. In total, Client Managers at the Weld County Work Release Center conduct over 200 offender breath screenings daily, all using handheld portable breath testers.

### The Problems

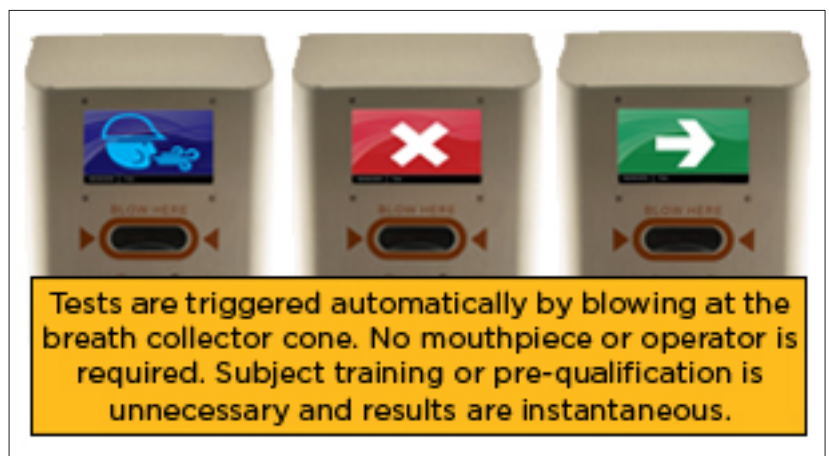
Top of the list was that Client Managers frequently complained about the “Yuck” factor of handling so many breath tests using traditional handheld breathalyzers. Indirect contact with saliva, bad breath, cigarette smoke and germs was unpleasant enough but it was also linked in the minds of the Client Managers to unsavory work conditions and illness. Additionally, at peak hours, manual breath testing was unable to handle all the traffic resulting in lines 20 people deep and general disruption.

### The Solution

Ryan Broswell, the newly appointed Director of Alternative Programs for Weld County, began searching for an automatic breath testing solution after his first week on the job. His search led to Lifeloc Technologies and their new *Sentinel*<sup>™</sup> automatic alcohol screening station. The *Sentinel*<sup>™</sup> turned into the perfect solution. The *Sentinel*<sup>™</sup> is designed to automate routine breath alcohol screening in high traffic situations where no amount of alcohol is permissible. The *Sentinel*<sup>™</sup> is located on the lobby wall of the Work Release Center. Every returning client is prompted to conduct a self-administered breath test upon return to the center. No mouthpieces or operators are required. A color icon prompts the user to blow into the collection cone and the two-second test is triggered automatically. Negative (no alcohol) results register instantly and an all clear icon is displayed. Positive results are detected in less than 10 seconds and trigger both an audible alarm and a visual “no-go” icon. The client can then be taken aside and administered a direct BAC test on a portable breathalyzer if desired, without holding up others. The solution is simple, fast, non-confrontational and practical.

### The Solution Benefits

- Client processing is performed six times faster with the *Sentinel*<sup>™</sup> than manually. Eliminating the lines has reduced opportunities for confrontation and trouble of those waiting to be screened. Building safety is better.
- Weld County saves approximately \$40 per day in the cost of mouthpieces (200 mouthpieces multiplied by \$0.20). At that rate the *Sentinel*<sup>™</sup> paid for itself in as little as 40 days.
- Over four hours of staff time is freed up daily as compared to manual testing. That’s a big





productivity boost for the center.

- The “Yuck” factor is now a thing of the past. Ryan concluded my interview by adding, “Improving employee hygiene was the incentive for purchasing an automated high volume testing device.... the device has made a big difference.”

### **Summary**

Court ordered breath alcohol testing and 24/7 offender management programs play an important and necessary part in reducing the overall recidivism rates of alcohol offenders. Effectively managing alcohol testing with just handheld portable breathalyzers can be unnecessarily expensive, resource intensive and administratively burdensome.

Recent technology advances in automated breath alcohol testing can now provide practical and cost effective alternatives to manual breath testing. The above example is proof that Lifeloc’s products produce tangible benefits to employees, and as a result offenders served. Lifeloc’s mission is to build the most precise, reliable and easiest to use

alcohol breath testing devices in the industry. For further information about our products please contact our sales department via email: [sales@lifeloc.com](mailto:sales@lifeloc.com) or call 303.431.9500.

