

'Nobody to pick from.' How opioids are devastating the workforce in Eastern Kentucky.

By Bill Estep

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Manchester

The pickings have gotten slimmer when Mike Bowling needs to hire someone for his convenience stores in London and Manchester, where he also has a tobacco store.

"This is the hardest I've ever seen getting workers and keeping workers," said Bowling, who has been in business 18 years. "You just ain't got nobody to pick from."

It's clear to Bowling that Kentucky's drug crisis has affected the workforce, causing higher turnover, bringing additional costs to train new employees and fueling employee thefts.

Recent research bears out that the state's high use of painkilling drugs called opioids appears to have reduced the labor pool.

Read more here:

<https://www.kentucky.com/news/state/article213189309.html#storylink=cpy>

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