

Safety First

We're On The Road With You

July 2016

Driver Fatigue Causes Over 100,000 Accidents on America's Highways

Driver fatigue is a significant cause of large truck related accidents. In fact, according to the Large Truck Crash Causation Study (LTCCS) 13 percent of commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers were considered to have been fatigued at the time of their crash. In the general population including all drivers, over 100,000 accidents a year are related to fatigued drivers. From both a statistical and anecdotal perspective, driver fatigue is an ongoing challenge to safety on the highways of the United States.

Driver fatigue is the result of physical or mental exertion that impairs performance. Driver fatigue may be due to a lack of adequate sleep, extended work hours, strenuous work or non-work activities, or a combination of other factors.

What steps can a driver take to reduce fatigue, enhance performance and improve safety on the road for your company and for the motoring public? Here are six key tips:



TIP #1: Get Enough Sleep Before Getting Behind the Wheel

Be sure to get an adequate amount of sleep each night. If possible, do not drive while your body is naturally drowsy, between the hours of 12 a.m. to 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Driver drowsiness may impair a driver's response time to potential hazards, increasing the chances of being in a crash. If you do become drowsy while driving, be sure to choose a safe place to pull over and rest.

Did You Know? A study by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) found that driver alertness was related to "time-of-day" more so than "time-on-task." Most people are less alert at night, especially after midnight. This drowsiness may be enhanced if you have been on the road for an extended period of time.

Did You Know? A recent study conducted to determine the risk of having a safety-critical event as a function of driving-hour suggests that incidents are highest during the first hour of driving. The authors hypothesize that drivers may be affected by

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sleep inertia shortly after waking from sleep. This may be especially true for drivers who sleep in the sleeper berth. Sleep inertia refers to impairment in a variety of performance tasks, including short-term memory, vigilance, cognitive functioning, reaction time, and ability to resist sleep.

TIP #2: Maintain a Healthy Diet

Skipping meals or eating at irregular times may lead to fatigue and/or food cravings. Also, going to bed with an empty stomach or immediately after a heavy meal can interfere with sleep. A light snack before bed may help you achieve more restful sleep. If you are not well-rested, induced fatigue may cause slow reaction time, reduced attention, memory lapses, lack of awareness, mood changes, and reduced judgment ability.



Did you Know? A recent study conducted on the sleeping and driving habits of CMV drivers concluded that an unhealthy lifestyle, long working hours, and sleeping problems were the main causes of drivers falling asleep while driving.

TIP #3: Take a Nap

If possible, you should take a nap when feeling drowsy or less alert. Naps should last a minimum of 10 minutes, but ideally a nap should last up to 45 minutes. Allow at least 15 minutes after waking to fully recover before starting to drive.

Did you know? Short naps are more effective at restoring energy levels than coffee. Naps aimed at preventing drowsiness are generally more effective in maintaining a driver's performance than naps taken when a person is already drowsy.

TIP #4: Avoid Medication That May Induce Drowsiness

Avoid medications that may make you drowsy if you plan to get behind the wheel. Most drowsiness-inducing medications include a warning label indicating that you should not operate vehicles or machinery during use. Some of the most common medicines that may make you drowsy are: tranquilizers, sleeping pills, allergy medicines and cold medicines.

Did You Know? In a recent study, 17 percent of CMV drivers were reported as having "over-the-counter drug use" at the time of a crash. Cold pills are one of the most common medicines that may make you drowsy. If you must drive with a cold, it is safer to suffer from the cold than drive under the effects of the medicine.

TIP #5: Recognize the Signals and Dangers of Drowsiness

Pay attention: Indicators of drowsiness include: frequent yawning, heavy eyes, and blurred vision.

Did You Know? Research has indicated that being awake for 18 hours is comparable to having a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 percent, which is legally intoxicated and leaves you at equal risk for a crash.

Did You Know? A 2005 study suggests that three out of every four CMV drivers report having experienced at least one type of driving error as a result of drowsiness.

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TIP #6: Do Not Rely on "Alertness Tricks" to Keep You Awake

Behaviors such as smoking, turning up the radio, drinking coffee, opening the window, and other "alertness tricks" are not real cures for drowsiness and may give you a false sense of security.

Did You Know? Excessive intake of caffeine can cause insomnia, headaches, irritability, and nervousness. It takes several minutes for caffeine to get into your system and deliver the energy boost you need, so if you are already tired when you first drink a caffeinated drink, it may not take effect as quickly as you might expect. In addition, if you are a regular caffeine user, the effect may be much smaller.

Source: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration - Key Elements of the FAST Act

In December of last year, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) was passed by Congress and signed into law by the President. This significant legislation sets funding authorization levels for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) through 2020 and mandates several rulemaking initiatives, reports to Congress, studies, and working groups. Presented below is an overview of key FAST Act initiatives as an overview to help identify upcoming activities of this regulatory body.

Key FAST Act topics highlighted on this website include:

- Grants: Several Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) grants will be consolidated starting in FY 2017 which will allow the Agency to more efficiently maximize grant funding.
- Compliance, Safety, Accountability: The FAST Act requires a comprehensive study of the Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) program's Safety Measurement System.
- Beyond Compliance: FMCSA will create a Beyond Compliance program to give carriers recognition, including credit in the CSA program, for voluntarily using advanced technologies or implementing enhanced driver fitness measures.
- Veteran Drivers: The Agency's commitment to helping our nation's veterans to transition to carriers in the motor carrier industry is bolstered by several FAST Act provisions.
- Authorization Levels: The FAST Act sets authorization levels for FMCSA through FY 2020.
- Rulemakings: The FAST Act requires twenty FMCSA rulemakings.
- Reports to Congress: The FAST Act requires fifteen reports to Congress.
- Working Groups: The FAST Act requires five working groups.
- Petitions: Section 5204 FAST Act provisions, mandates that the Agency publish a summary of all petitions for regulatory action submitted to the Administration.

In addition to the ongoing loss control work Deep South loss control consultants do on a consistent basis for clients, they also work to assist companies in the area of regulatory compliance.



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FMCSA Taking Harder Look at Sleep Apnea

For sometime now, transportation safety experts in both the public and private sector have been concerned about the role of sleep apnea relative to transportation safety.

Now the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) request data and information concerning the prevalence of moderate-to-severe obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) among individuals occupying safety sensitive positions in highway and rail transportation, and on its potential consequences for the safety of rail and highway transportation. FMCSA and FRA are also requesting information on potential costs and benefits

from regulatory actions that address the safety risks associated with motor carrier and rail transportation workers in safety sensitive positions who have OSA. For instance, both agencies are requesting comment on the costs and benefits of requiring motor carrier and rail transportation workers in safety sensitive positions who exhibit multiple risk factors for OSA to undergo evaluation and treatment by a healthcare professional with expertise in sleep disorders.

The comment period has been extended to July, 9 2016 for those who would like to provide information or weigh-in on any proposed rule changes relative to to safety sensitive personnel who may have moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnea.

Click the link to comment: [FMCSA - Evaluation of Safety Sensitive Personnel for Moderate to Severe OSA Comments](#)



Loss Control Spotlight: Meet Jim Banta

As a result of Deep South's continued growth, the company has recently added two new loss control consultants to the staff. In this issue of Safety First, we introduce you to Jim Banta. Jim started with the company in October of last year and is based out of Oklahoma City. Currently he is serving Deep South clients in Oklahoma, and parts of Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri.

Jim brings to the company more than fifteen years of in-depth property and casualty loss control experience. His loss control knowledge and strong analytical skills enable him to assist clients in identifying areas of exposure, regulatory compliance deficits and safety concerns. Jim is helping companies across the Deep South service footprint improve their safety posture and contain their total cost of risk. Jim states that since joining Deep South, he appreciates working with many great people throughout the organization. He says, "everyone knows what they are doing, are more than willing to be of assistance and genuinely care about their clients." He indicates the commitment to providing clients with an exceptional level of service is evident each and every day.

Jim was born in Enid, Oklahoma and grew up in Oklahoma City where he has lived most of his life. He is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma with a B.A. degree in Philosophy. After graduation, jobs took him to Denver, Colorado, Austin, Texas and Red River, New Mexico. earlier in his career. He returned to Oklahoma City and lives there now with his wife of eight years. In his spare time, Jim enjoys riding his bicycle on road treks of fifty miles or more. Once he rode his bike with friends at an event that traversed the entire state of Iowa. He is an advanced black belt in several martial art disciplines. He also enjoys teaching meditation and stress management.

Deep South Loss Control Contact Information

E-mail: losscontrol@deep-south.com • Telephone: 214.493.4225 • Facsimile: 888.863.8670 • www.deep-south.com