

Western Safety Hour Topic

Fatigue – Don't Drive Tired!



Welcome to this Safety Hour Discussion Topic which is focused on the dangers we face whilst driving under fatigue

Studies have shown that drivers don't fall asleep without warning. Drivers who fall asleep at the wheel have often tried to fight off drowsiness by opening a window, or by turning up the radio. This doesn't work for long.

The facts

- Research suggests that almost 20% of accidents on major roads are sleep-related
- Sleep-related accidents are more likely than others to result in a fatality or serious injury
- Peak times for accidents are in the early hours and after lunch
- About 40% of sleep-related accidents involve commercial vehicles
- Men under 30 have the highest risk of falling asleep at the wheel



- Plan your journey to include a 15-minute break every two hours.
- Don't start a long trip if you're already tired.
- Remember the risks if you have to get up unusually early to start a long drive
- Try to avoid long trips between midnight and 6am when you're likely to feel sleepy anyway.
- If you start to feel sleepy, find a safe place to stop - not the hard shoulder of a motorway.

- Drink two cups of coffee or a high-caffeine drink and have a rest for 10 to 15 minutes to allow time for the caffeine to kick in.
- Ensure you do not have the heating too high as this does really affect drowsiness

Remember, the only real cure for sleepiness is proper sleep. A caffeine drink or a nap is a short-term solution that will only allow you to keep driving for a short time.

Visit here for further information:

<https://www.gov.uk/sleepiness-and-driving>

Discussion points

Please discuss the following questions in your safety hour group:

- 1) How much sleep did you get last night?
- 2) How are you feeling now?
- 3) Think before you make a long journey. Plan in breaks, share the mileage
- 4) Is your journey really necessary or should you take up the offer of overnight accommodation from your employer and what are your reasons for this?

We can all make a difference!

- Please agree in your group what you will do differently as a result of your safety hour discussion today...
 - ...As an individual employee?
 - ...As a team member?
 - ...As a team leader, supervisor or manager?
- How will you hold each other to account for what you have agreed to do?

Western Route is committed to ensuring every one of us goes home safely at the end of every day

For further information regarding Western Safety Hour including topics and a calendar of scheduled safety hours see our Share Point Site: <http://oc.hiav.networkrail.co.uk/sites/whsh/Pages>