



## Let's Talk—Fatigue on the Roadways

**As the days are warming up fatigue on the roadways heats up as well.**

The roads can be a dangerous place. Forbes Magazine estimates 44,000 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2023. One common cause is driving while fatigued.

- 100,000 police-reported crashes are the results of drowsy driving each year. (NHTSA)
- More than 40% of drivers admitted they have fallen asleep behind the wheel. (AAA)

### **Driving While Fatigued**

We have all been there- our eyes get heavy, we begin to close them, and then our head suddenly jerks up after hitting the rumble strips on the side of the road. When this occurs, it will wake an individual up, but only for a short period. This is an unsafe act that is quite common on our roadways.

Fatigued driving can be caused by any number of factors. The most common cause of fatigued driving is lack of sleep. It can also be caused or made worse by untreated sleep disorders, medications, drinking alcohol, or shift work.

### **How to Avoid Being Fatigued While Driving**

- Get plenty of rest. It is recommended to get a minimum of seven hours of sleep.
- Medications—Decide before your drive, understand any potential side effects before driving.
- Take care of your health. Addressing other health issues can greatly improve how you feel both at home and at work.
- Eat a better diet. Food to humans is like gasoline to a car, if you put dirty fuel in, it will not run well. Eat healthy, whole foods, not junk!

### **To sum it up...**

Driving is one of the more hazardous tasks we do. When you pair it with unsafe acts such as driving while fatigued, you not only put yourself at risk, but you also put everyone around you at risk. Be proactive in preventing fatigue and drowsiness. When it is affecting you while driving, pull over and get rest before continuing.



Sponsored by:  
SWPA SAFETY COMMITTEE and MAXAM TIRE



Toolbox Talks are provided as a courtesy to SWPA members. Please remember they are to assist you in developing a safety plan. Keep in mind OSHA, Department of Labor and Insurance requirements may change over time and it is your responsibility to make sure your safety plan is up to date. Reference: OSHA, NIOSH, FRA, Safety Talk Ideas.com

