

FATAL FATIGUE NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2009

FATAL FATIGUE continues forward with our seasonal newsletter to reach out and share educational information to raise awareness to the dangers of drowsy driving. We hope someday to see all states adopt an amendment to their laws to address this form of reckless driving. For further information, please read our Mission Statement: <http://www.fatalfatigue.com>.

BE PREPARED-SUMMER IS COMING!

With Memorial Day weekend nearing and the Fourth of July celebration around the bend from there, we begin another kickoff with the travel season. Millions of Americans will plan driving trips that will begin at all times of day and night—with some drivers having been up all night just to pack for their trip, we'd like to share some safety tips before you get in the car to combat drowsy driving as well as while you are on the road.

Before “hitting the road”

- ✓ *Get adequate sleep: 7-9 hours to maintain proper alertness during the day!
- ✓ *Avoid alcohol and sedating medications: check your labels or ask your doctor!
- ✓ *Schedule breaks: **about every 100 miles or every 2 hours during long trips!**
- ✓ *Arrange for an alert travel companion: someone to talk and share the driving!

Get Help if you Feel Drowsy! **Caffeine and Rest Areas**

Caffeine promotes short-term alertness. It takes about 30 minutes for caffeine to begin working, so the best thing to do is pull over for coffee or other type of caffeinated beverage, take a short nap, get out and stretch, then get back on the road. Rest areas were made for this kind of assistance—please use them! Hey, just remember caffeine won't have much of an effect on people who drink it often!

Some tested information with resources:

- Researcher Pierre Philip, M.D., Ph.D and colleagues tested the effects of both napping and caffeine on 12 male participants. They were videotaped driving on an open highway during the day (6:00 pm to 7:30 pm) or at late-night (2:00 am to 3:30 am). The late-night group drank either a cup of regular coffee, decaf coffee, or took a nap.
- When driving performance was compared between the two groups, 75% of these drivers performed similarly to the daytime condition after drinking regular coffee and 66% performed consistently with daytime driving after taking a nap. Of those who received decaf coffee, for instance, only 13% did as well as they did during the day.

- When driving performance was compared between the two groups, 75% of these drivers performed similarly to the daytime condition after drinking regular coffee and 66% performed consistently with daytime driving after taking a nap. Of those who received decaf coffee, for instance, only 13% did as well as they did during the day.

These statistical results indicate that taking a nap and drinking a caffeinated beverage reduce the risk of impaired driving while drowsy at night. However, these researchers do still caution that only one napping or caffeine event was tested and different groups may respond differently to these countermeasures. Read more: www.drowsydriving.org!

FATAL FATIGUE ON SHARING EDUCATION!

The National Sleep Foundation (“NSF”) is dedicated to lowering the incidence of drowsy driving crashes. To join their life-saving campaign, please visit their updated web site: <http://www.sleepfoundation.org>!

NSF also offers a free, bi-weekly e-mail newsletter, sign up at: www.sleepfoundation.org/signup.html.

For additional information on how to raise awareness as to the dangers of drowsy driving, please visit NSF's special web site, www.drowsydriving.org.

NATIONAL SLEEP AWARENESS WEEK® MARCH 1-8, 2009!

National Sleep Awareness Week (“NSAW”) 2009 was March 1-8, 2009. This year’s campaign was great! Fatal Fatigue participated again this year through local, educational efforts using NSF’s great materials. Again, we were a 2009 Organizational Sleep Awareness Partner for this event!

GET INVOLVED!

Contact your local representative and let them know you want to see an amendment to Washington State’s Vehicular Homicide Statute, such as a “sleeping-driver homicide” amendment. This amendment would send a strong message of accountability for a driver’s actions behind the wheel of their car when they chose to drive while sleepy. Go to: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/Default.aspx>, find your legislator for your district and e-mail them your concerns.

Be safe this spring and summer! If you would like to support our efforts, please send us an e-mail, we are also always in need of new articles for our web site as well! Also, if you know of someone who would like to be added to our newsletter, please let us know at: FatalFatigue@hotmail.com.

Look for our next seasonal newsletter. God bless!
