



FATAL FATIGUE NEWSLETTER

Summer/Fall 2011

Drowsy Driving (Courtesy of the [National Sleep Foundation](#))

Your eyelids droop and your head starts to nod. Yawning becomes almost constant and your vision seems blurry. You blink hard, focus your eyes and suddenly realize that you've veered onto the shoulder or into oncoming traffic for a moment and quickly straighten the wheel. This time you were lucky; next time you could become the latest victim of the tragedy of drowsy driving.

According to the National Sleep Foundation's *Sleep in America* poll, 60% of Americans have driven while feeling sleepy and 37% admit to actually having fallen asleep at the wheel in the past year. However, many people cannot tell if or when they are about to fall asleep. And if sleepiness comes on while driving, many say to themselves, "I can handle this, I'll be fine." Yet they're putting themselves and others in danger. What they really need is a nap or a good night's sleep.

Here are some signs that should tell a driver to stop and rest:

- Difficulty focusing, frequent blinking, or heavy eyelids
- Daydreaming; wandering/disconnected thoughts
- Trouble remembering the last few miles driven; missing exits or traffic signs
- Yawning repeatedly or rubbing your eyes
- Trouble keeping your head up
- Drifting from your lane, tailgating, or hitting a shoulder rumble strip
- Feeling restless and irritable

The National Sleep Foundation's [Key Messages and Talking Points](#) on Drowsy Driving. For more information, visit [DrowsyDriving.org](#).

Performance Analysis of Centerline Rumble Strips in Washington State

With a goal of reducing collisions, WSDOT implemented policy for installing centerline rumble strips on undivided highways and invested in funding strategies for those installations in 2006. There have been some limited studies on the effectiveness of those installations, but a more complete study is appropriate.

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Research/Reports/700/768.1.htm>

National Sleep Awareness Week

National Sleep Awareness Week™, which takes place March 5-11, 2012, is an annual public education and awareness campaign to promote the importance of sleep. The week begins with the announcement of the National Sleep Foundation's Sleep in America poll results and ends with the clock change to Daylight Saving Time, where Americans lose one hour of sleep.

If you would like to learn more about how you can help in your own community to raise awareness during National Sleep Awareness week, see the website below for helpful information.

<http://www.sleepfoundation.org/event/national-sleep-awareness-week%C2%AE>

How Can You Help?

Won't you contact your local representative and let them know you want more public education on the dangers of drowsy driving? Let them know you want our roads safer by creating accountability through a "sleeping-driver homicide" amendment to Washington State's Vehicular Homicide Statute. Go to: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature>

You can also write your senators and congressman to ask for support of funding for sleep activities. You can do this through NSF's website at www.sleepfoundation.org/advocacy.

Remember the National Sleep Foundation, is dedicated to lowering the incidence of drowsy driving crashes by raising awareness! They now have *new* tools available to help with education related to drowsy driving, such as a PowerPoint presentation, informative sleep sheets and an article entitled *Tired Cops* by Brian Vila, Ph.D. Here is the link to the site to obtain the educational items related to drowsy driving: <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/catalog/drowsy-driving-education>.

To join this life-saving campaign, please go the National Sleep Foundation's website and make a tax-deductible contribution: <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/donate>. Contributors of \$15 or more receive their free "Sleepy? Pull Over!" bumper sticker and a year's subscription to a quarterly newsletter, *Sleepmatters*. They also offer a free, bi-weekly e-mail newsletter with information on sleep and new developments in research. Sign up at www.sleepfoundation.org/signup.html. They also now offer *Facebook* and *MySpace* as well in their online community section!

What's New on Our Website?

Over 6,700 hits to our website!

Please see the updated articles on our home page and for further information, please read our Mission Statement. Please show support by e-mailing us or, if you know of someone who would like to be added to our newsletter list, please let us know. Our e-mail address is: FatalFatigue@hotmail.com.

Look for our next seasonal newsletter. God bless!