

DROWSY DRIVING

As a driver, your number one responsibility is to get yourself and your passengers to your destination safely. When behind the wheel you always need to be alert and focused at the job at hand- driving. At 55 mph, a vehicle travels the length of a football field in 3.7 seconds. This is no time for a "mini" snooze. On the "roads more traveled" being an attentive driver and looking out for the one who isn't, is increasingly important. Drive focused. Stay safe.

Safety Facts for the Road

- 🚗 Drowsy driving causes more than 100,000 crashes each year, resulting in 40,000 injuries and 1,550 deaths. Sadly, these numbers represent only the tip of the iceberg since drowsy driving is seriously under-reported (NSF).
- 🚗 Crashes caused by drowsy driving are often serious crashes and occur most often on high-speed rural highways when the driver is alone.
- 🚗 A recent National Sleep Foundation study revealed that one-half (51%) of adults have driven while drowsy and 17% report having fallen asleep while driving within the past year.
- 🚗 Drowsy driving could happen to anyone. Those most at risk include:
 - Young people, who tend to stay up late, sleep too little, and drive at night.
 - America's 25 million rotating shift workers whose sleep is disrupted by long or irregular hours.
 - Commercial drivers are especially susceptible to drowsy driving crashes. Studies suggest fatigue may be a contributing factor in 30 to 40 percent of all heavy truck crashes.
 - People with untreated sleep apnea syndrome or narcolepsy have interrupted sleep that causes fatigue.

Do you know when you're driving drowsy?

Some warning signs of fatigue:

- 🚗 You can't remember the last few miles driven.
- 🚗 You hit a rumble strip or drift from your lane.
- 🚗 Your thoughts are wandering and disconnected.
- 🚗 You yawn repeatedly.

Drive Focused. Stay Safe. Avoid Drowsy Driving.

- 🚗 Be aware of your behavior and the behavior of others on the road during the late night, early morning and mid afternoon hours when crashes caused by drowsy driving are most likely to occur. Plan a rest stop during these hours.
- 🚗 Get a full night of rest before driving. If you become tired while driving, stop. A short nap (15 to 45 minutes) and consuming caffeine can help temporarily.
- 🚗 Stop at regular when driving long distances. Get out of the car every 2 hours to stretch and walk briskly.
- 🚗 Try to set a limit of 300-400 miles of driving per day.
- 🚗 Avoid taking medications that cause drowsiness.

If you're tired and in danger of falling asleep, you cannot predict when a "mini" sleep may occur. A driver cannot react to road dangers when tired. Getting enough sleep will not only help you feel better, it can save your life.

- 🚗 You have difficulty focusing or keeping eyes open.
- 🚗 You tailgate or miss traffic signs.
- 🚗 You have trouble keeping your head up.
- 🚗 You keep pulling your vehicle back into the lane.