

Safety Alert of THE MONTH

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN BC'S FOREST INDUSTRY

January 2016

Sleep and Fatigue Impairment

Gary was the only mechanic and the loader was down. He had been up sick with the flu all night but if he didn't get out there, the whole operation would grind to a halt. As he got himself ready to head out for work, he noticed that he was forgetting simple things and just couldn't clear the fog from his brain. However, he knew enough that he shouldn't be driving out to the block so he called his supervisor to see if they could come up with an alternate plan. "Your timing is terrible but we'll work around it" said his supervisor. "We'll get the mobile mechanic from the dealer to come out here. That's better than you trying to drive out and falling asleep at the wheel. I'm glad you called to let me know."

Logging and forestry work can mean working long hours. Working hard and getting the job done is an important part of the industry's culture. However, sometimes this can go too far and people work while being impaired by fatigue. Follow these tips from the Transportation Safety Board to get better sleep and reduce the risk of fatigue impairment while at work.

Fatigue Controls at Work

- Increased supervisor/co-worker monitoring
- Working in pairs
- Task rotation
- Additional breaks
- Rescheduling high risk or boring tasks to a time when workers are well rested



Take a Nap

- Naps can supplement sleep, not replace it.
- Naps 10 minutes or longer can improve alertness, communication and mood.
- The value of a nap doesn't depend on the time of day.
- Allow 5 to 20 minutes for sleep inertia to pass. Sleep inertia is that groggy feeling you get right after you wake up.



Safety Alert of THE MONTH

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN BC'S FOREST INDUSTRY

Smart Use of Caffeine

- Has stimulant effects that can improve alertness and performance
- Best used strategically – only when you really need help staying awake
- Takes 20 minutes to take effect and the effects can last up to 6 hours
- You can develop both a dependence and a tolerance

Drugs and Alcohol

- Alcohol can help you relax before bed, but it can also disrupt your sleep.
- Sleeping pills are best used occasionally or for only a few days at a time.
- Cold and flu medication can keep you from sleeping.

Eating Right

- Maintaining blood sugar levels is key to controlling ups and downs in energy levels.
- High-sugar foods can cause your blood sugar to rise and fall quickly.
- Eating complex carbohydrates and high-protein foods can actually increase alertness.



Physical Exercise

- Can help you sleep better and feel more rested
- Helps relieve stress, boost your health, strengthen your immune function, and improve muscle tone and strength
- Any activity that keeps your heart rate elevated for at least 20 minutes is good



Safety Alert of THE MONTH

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN BC'S FOREST INDUSTRY

Additional resources on sleep and managing fatigue:

- 1) Transportation Safety Board - <https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/civilaviation/standards/sms-frms-menu-634.htm>
- 2) Sleep and Fatigue Articles - http://sleepanddreams.com/?page_id=2390
- 3) Fatigue at Work Infographic - <http://www.safetydriven.ca/2015/12/04/what-is-fatigue/>
- 4) Guide to Safe Work – Fatigue Management Infoflip - <http://www.bcforestsafe.org/files/files/newsroom/trucksafe-06-08-01-fatigue.pdf>

