



<b>S&amp;W READY MIX CONCRETE COMPANY</b>	<b>APRIL</b>
<b>DRIVER SAFETY SERIES – MONTHLY TRAINING</b>	
<b>DRIVER FATIGUE</b>	

### FACTS:

Driver fatigue is a very dangerous condition created when a person is suffering symptoms of fatigue while driving, often resulting from the hypnotic (Inducing sleep) effect especially during nighttime driving either falling asleep at the wheel or so exhausted they made serious – and fatal – driving errors. However the early hours of the morning and the middle of the afternoon are the peak times for fatigue accidents as well.

### SELF CHECK:

How much do you know about sleep and sleep debt? Take this quiz to find out.

1. **TRUE or FALSE - Coffee overcomes the effects of drowsiness while driving.**  
**FALSE - Stimulants are no substitute for sleep. Drinks containing caffeine, such as coffee or cola, can help you feel more alert but the effects last only for a short time.**
2. **TRUE or FALSE - I can tell when I'm going to go to sleep.**  
**FALSE - Sleep is not voluntary. If you're drowsy, you can fall asleep and never even know it. You cannot tell how long you've been asleep.**
3. **TRUE or FALSE - Rolling down my window or singing along with the radio will keep me awake.**  
**FALSE - An open window or the radio has no lasting effect on a persons ability to stay awake.**
4. **TRUE or FALSE - I'm a safe driver so it doesn't matter if I'm sleepy.**  
**FALSE - The only safe driver is an alert driver. Even the safest drivers become confused and use poor judgment when they are sleepy.**
5. **TRUE or FALSE - Being sleepy makes you misperceive things.**  
**TRUE - One of the warning signs of a drowsy driver is misjudging surroundings.**
6. **TRUE or FALSE - Little green men in the middle of the road may mean the driver is too tired to drive.**  
**TRUE - Seeing things that are not there is a good indication it is time to stop driving and take a rest.**
7. **TRUE or FALSE - On a long trip, the driver should never take a break but try to arrive at the destination as quickly as possible.**  
**FALSE - Driving, especially for long distances, reveals a drivers true level of sleepiness. To be safe, drivers should take a break every three hours.**
8. **TRUE or FALSE - A microsleep lasts four or five seconds.**  
**TRUE - During a "microsleep" of four or five seconds, a car can travel 100 yards, plenty of time to cause a serious crash.**

### INDICATORS OF FATIGUE:

- Can't remember the last few miles driven
- Drift from their lanes or hit a rumble strip
- Experience wandering or disconnected thoughts
- Yawn repeatedly
- Have difficulty focusing or keeping your eyes open
- Tailgate or miss traffic signs
- Have trouble keeping your head up
- Jerk your vehicle back into the lane

### PREVENTING FATIGUE:

There are ways to prevent driver fatigue, starting even before you get behind the wheel:

*First*, drivers should get a good night's sleep. While this varies from individual to individual, the average person requires about 8 hours of sleep a night.

*Second*, plan to drive long trips with a companion. Passengers can help look for early warning signs of fatigue or take over the driving duties when needed. Passengers should stay awake to talk to the driver.

If you're going to be driving, avoid alcohol and medications (over-the-counter and prescribed) that may impair performance. Once on the road, to avoid driver fatigue:

- Schedule regular stops at least every 100 miles or 2 hours.
- Recognize when you are in danger of falling asleep.
- Don't rely on the radio or opening a window to keep you awake.
- If tired, pull off into a safe area away from traffic and take a brief nap (15 to 45 minutes).
- Eat sensibly and avoid heavy meals.