Drowsy Driving

Research shows that fatigue is a significant factor in motor vehicle, commercial trucking and rail collisions.

- Drowsy driving causes more than 100,000 motor vehicle crashes a year, resulting in 40,000 injuries and 1,550 deaths, according to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration research [1].
- An AAA Traffic Safety Foundation study [2] found that 37 percent of drivers report having fallen asleep behind the wheel at some point in their lives. An estimated 21 percent of fatal crashes, 13 percent of crashes resulting in severe injury and 6 percent of all crashes, involve a drowsy driver, according to a 2014 study by the AAA.
- Driver-related factors such as fatigue were recorded for 34 percent of the drivers of large trucks in fatal collisions in 2010 according to the U.S. Department of Transportation [3] (DOT).
- Speeding was the top driver-related factor in crashes involving large trucks, followed by distraction/inattention, impairment (fatigue, alcohol, illness, etc.), failure to keep in proper lane and vision obscured, according to the DOT.
- A 2013 study by the Federal Rail Administration [4] found that fatigue greatly increases the chances of an accident in which human factors play a role, with the risk of such an accident rising from11 percent to 65 percent.

DRIVING BEHAVIORS REPORTED FOR DRIVERS AND MOTORCYCLE OPERATORS INVOLVED IN FATAL CRASHES, 2013

Behavior
Driving too fast for conditions or in excess of posted speed limit or racing
Under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication
Failure to keep in proper lane
Failure to yield right of way
Distracted (phone, talking, eating, etc.)
Operating vehicle in a careless manner
Overcorrecting/oversteering
Failure to obey traffic signs, signals or officer
Swerving or avoiding due to wind, slippery surface, other vehicle, object, nonmotorist in roadway, etc.
Operating vehicle in erratic, reckless, or negligent manner
Vision obscured (rain, snow, glare, lights, buildings, trees, etc.)
Drowsy, asleep, fatigued, ill, or blacked out
Driving wrong way in one-way traffic or on wrong side of road
Making improper turn
Other factors
None reported
Unknown
Total drivers (1)

(1) The sum of percentages is greater than 100 percent because more than one factor may be present for the same driver.

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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