

Managing Fatigue

Fatigue is a factor in many traffic incidents and the more time spent behind the wheel; the greater the odds that you may be involved in a fatigue related incident. It is important to manage fatigue, and stay alert in all situations; especially when driving.

Pavement marking schedules are demanding, the work can be stressful and staying alert can be challenging. Road work also involves a high level of responsibility and awareness to reduce the risk of injury. Be aware that fatigue is more likely to set in at the end of the shift and during the drive back to the shop. Physical activity spent on the job, combined with other factors, can affect driving safety.

Strategies for staying alert on the job and when you drive:

- Plan your off-duty activities to allow enough time for adequate sleep. Although, everyone's sleep requirements are different, on average, 7 – 8 hours of sleep for every 24 hours is about what is needed.
- When you begin to feel drowsy pull over and take a break. Walk around, get fresh air, stretch. If necessary, take a nap. On longer drives, take breaks at least every two hours.
- Share driving responsibilities whenever possible. When two people are riding in the same cab the passenger is required to stay awake and assist with monitoring fatigue symptoms and determining when it is time to pull over, refresh and take a break.
- Keep steady airflow in the vehicle while driving.
- Eat a well-balanced diet and stay hydrated. Be cautious with nicotine, caffeine and alcohol consumption. Nicotine and caffeine are stimulants that can affect sleep. Although alcohol may make you feel sleepy, it can affect the quality of restorative sleep. Also, use caution with over the counter medications as they can make you drowsy.
- Remember to always **Buckle Up!**

