Safety Share

Drowsy Driving

Opportunity

Driving while sleep-deprived carries risks like driving impaired by alcohol. Being awake for 20 consecutive hours degrades your reaction speed, judgment, and focus to a level comparable to a 0.08% Blood Alcohol Concentration. A brief 3 to 4 second "microsleep" at highway speeds leaves a vehicle traveling over 100 meters completely uncontrolled.

Administrative Control

November 1-7, 2026, is Drowsy Driving Prevention Week in the United States (https://www.thensf.org/drowsy-driving-prevention/).

Stop and act if you or a co-worker experience any of the following behind the wheel:

- Frequent yawning or heavy eyelids.
- Drifting across lanes or hitting shoulder rumble strips.
- Missing highway exits, road signs, or turns.
- Zoning out and not recalling the last few kilometers driven.
- Erratic speeds, sudden tailgating, or delayed braking.

Best Practices & Controls Include:

- Get quality rest: Aim for 7–9 hours of sleep before shifts or long road trips.
- Take regular stops: Take a 15-minute break every 2 hours or 150–200 km to stretch, walk, and reset focus.
- Do not rely solely on caffeine: While coffee or energy drinks provide a temporary burst of alertness, they mask fatigue and lead to sudden crashes. Sleep is the only true fix.
- Pull over safely: If you cannot keep your eyes open, pull into an approved rest area, lock your vehicle, and take a 20-minute power nap.
- Check medication warnings: Verify cold remedies, allergy meds, or prescriptions for drowsiness warnings before operating vehicles.



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