

OHBA Safety Pages: Shifts, Long Hours and Fatigue

Working evening or early morning shifts makes it hard to get enough quality sleep. Lack of sleep and long work hours can make you tired (fatigued) at work. Tired workers can have a harder time focusing, putting them at higher risk for injury.



➤ Signs of fatigue include

- Poor sleep
- Feeling tired or falling asleep at work
- Lack of energy or motivation; a ‘do not care’ attitude; moodiness; or poor judgment
- Difficulty focusing on work
- Slowed reactions
- Increased anger or irritability

➤ Take action

- Take breaks at least every 1 to 2 hours or spend time working on another task.
- Eat healthy snacks often, such as fruit and nuts. Candy, chips, and other processed and sugary foods make you feel more tired.
- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.
- If possible, stay or go frequently into brightly lit areas to improve alertness.
- Don’t drive or operate machinery if overly tired. Drowsiness increases your risk of a car crash or other incident.

➤ Make changes

- Rest on your days off and have at least one day off per week.
- Limit use of caffeine, especially 5 hours or more before bed.
- Make your sleeping space comfortable, dark, and quiet. Avoid lighted screens of cell phones, tablets, computers, etc., 60 to 90 minutes before bed.
- Get 7 to 9 hours of quality sleep each day (most people need this much). See a doctor if you are having trouble sleeping or if you fall asleep at work. Remember, getting enough sleep can save your life.



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SAFETY PAGE MEETING GUIDE

Topic: Shifts, Long Hours, and Fatigue

Employer: _____ Project: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Shift: _____

Number in crew: _____ Number attending: _____

Safety or Health issues discussed. Include recent accident investigations and hazards involving tools, equipment, the work environment, work practices and any Safety or Health recommendations:

Follow up on recommendations from last safety meeting:

Record of those attending:

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Supervisor's remarks: _____

Supervisor: _____ (Print) _____ (Signature)

OHBA Safety Pages: Drowsy Driving

Drowsy driving is a major problem in the United States. The risk, danger, and often tragic results of drowsy driving are alarming. Drowsy driving is the dangerous combination of driving and sleepiness or fatigue. This usually happens when a driver has not slept enough, but it can also happen because of untreated sleep disorders, medications, drinking alcohol, or shift work.

No one knows the exact moment when sleep comes over their body. Falling asleep at the wheel is clearly dangerous but being sleepy affects your ability to drive safely even if you don't fall asleep. Drowsiness:

- Makes you less able to pay attention to the road.
- Slows reaction time if you must brake or steer suddenly.
- Affects your ability to make good decisions.

Did You Know?

- An estimated 1 in 25 adult drivers (aged 18 years or older) report having fallen asleep while driving in the previous 30 days.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that in 2017 drowsy driving was responsible for 91,000 crashes—resulting in 50,000 injuries and nearly 800 deaths. However, these numbers are underestimated, and up to 6,000 fatal crashes each year may be caused by drowsy drivers.

Who's more likely to drive drowsy?

- Drivers who do not get enough sleep.
- Shift workers who are people that work the night shift or long shifts.
- Drivers with untreated sleep disorders such as sleep apnea, where breathing repeatedly stops and starts.
- Drivers who use medications that make them sleepy.

Learn the warning signs of drowsy driving:

- Yawning or blinking frequently.
- Difficulty remembering the past few miles driven.
- Missing your exit.
- Drifting from your lane.
- Hitting a rumble strip on the side of the road.

How often do Americans fall asleep while driving?

According to a survey among nearly 150,000 adults in 19 states and the District of Columbia:

- 4% of adults report that they had fallen asleep while driving at least once in the previous 30 days.¹
- People who snored or usually slept 6 or fewer hours per day were more likely to report falling asleep while driving.

Prevent drowsy driving before taking the wheel

- Get enough sleep! Most adults need at least 7 hours of sleep a day, while teens need at least 8 hours.
- Develop good sleeping habits, such as sticking to a sleep schedule.
- If you have a sleep disorder or have symptoms of a sleep disorder such as snoring or feeling sleepy during the day, talk to your doctor about treatment options.
- Avoid drinking alcohol or taking medications that make you sleepy. Be sure to check the label on any medications or talk to your pharmacist.



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OHBA Safety Pages: Avoiding Back Injury at Work

The key to avoiding back injury at work is to always plan ahead. Know how to handle a situation before it happens, that way when something does come up you will be able to make the best possible decision based on the new circumstances.

What is the first plan of action that you must use when you see a load that could pose a risk of injury?...

The safest way to handle the situation is to use whatever form of mechanical means that you have available to you. This means using excavators, loaders, forklifts, dollies, come-alongs, pry-bars, etc. etc. Always use machinery or equipment as your first defense against back injury at work.

What is the second plan of action that you must use when you see a load that could pose a risk of injury?...

Ask a fellow crewmember to help you lift the load. As a rule of thumb, a worker can safely lift 50 lbs. without serious concern of back injury. Therefore, if a piece of equipment weighs 140 lbs., 3 workers should be available to lift the weight. All crewmembers should also be watching out for one another and should offer to help out if they see someone else trying to lift something that is too heavy.

What is the third plan of action that you must use when you see a load that could pose a risk of injury?...

Discuss the situation with your supervisor. Never hesitate to talk to your supervisor if you feel that lifting a load could be dangerous. Any reasonable supervisor will listen to your concerns and find a safer way of handling the situation.

Remember... NO ONE IS GOING TO THANK YOU IF YOU INJURE YOURSELF!

Everyone should go home safely at the end of the day, so always remember to use caution and follow the above three steps before lifting anything that could pose a risk of injury.



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OHBA Safety Pages: Slips, Trips, and Falls

Same-level slips, trips, and falls happen in almost every type of work setting—and unfortunately, they happen often. An estimated 3.8 million disabling work injuries are caused each year by slips, trips, and falls, accounting for roughly 15 percent of all workers' compensation costs.

Slips

A slip occurs when there is too little friction or traction between your footwear and the floor surface. In most slip events involving walking, the worker's heel on the front foot slips forward as they're transferring weight, causing them to fall backwards.

Common slips are:

- Wet (or dry but slippery) material on the floor
- Loose, unsecured rugs or mats
- Walking surfaces that have unequal traction

Trips

A trip occurs when your foot strikes an object, resulting in a loss of balance. Your momentum causes your body to continue forward.

Common trip causes are:

- Cords or clutter in walkways
- An obstructed view
- Taking a shortcut instead of a proven path
- Uneven stairs



Preventing slips and trips

- Wear appropriate shoes.
- Slow down.
- Keep walkways clear and well-lit.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Stay alert for uneven surfaces, curbs, and potholes.
- Assume there is ice if it's near freezing.
- Take one step at a time; keep one hand free.
- Make sure your view is not obstructed.
- Remove, tie up, or secure cords.
- Use a ladder—not a chair, table, bucket, or box.

Housekeeping

Establishing excellent housekeeping practices is the key to preventing slip, trip, and fall injuries. Keeping aisles clear and well-lit for your employees, your customers, and your visitors is a great start.

Having a high housekeeping standard offers more benefits than just preventing slip, trip, and fall injuries. Employees are more likely to listen to messages about safety and health when they trust that the company means them. It can help reduce stress so they can focus on the task.

Transition areas

Transition areas can cause slips because the walking surface changes from one type to another. Here are a few common ones:

- Entering a building
- Moving from a carpeted surface to a non-carpeted surface, or vice versa
- Moving from even terrain to uneven terrain, or vice versa
- Moving through doorways or passageways

Credit: SAIF.com



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OHBA Safety Pages: Do Not Obstruct

DO NOT OBSTRUCT

- Emergency Showers!
- Emergency Eye Wash Stations!
- Electrical Panels!
- Emergency Stop Controls!
- Exit Paths!
- Exit Doors!
- Fire Hoses!
- Fire Extinguishers!
- Fire Alarm Pull Stations!



YOUR life may depend on it!



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