

# THE COMMUNIQUÉ



## Alleviate Fatigue

*No driver is permitted to operate a motor vehicle when his/her ability and/or alertness is impaired by fatigue that makes it unsafe to begin or continue to drive the vehicle. Fatigue is the result of physical or mental exertion that impairs performance. It can be felt as a general tiredness, a lack of energy, weakness or simply a difficulty concentrating. Ultimately it affects the way decisions are made; while behind the wheel the ability to make decisions quickly is paramount to avoiding catastrophe.*

First, know the Warning Signs:

- \* Sore eyes
- \* Constant yawning
- \* Delayed reactions
- \* Variations in driving speed
- \* Daydreaming
- \* Trouble keeping your head upright
- \* Drifting over lanes
- \* Difficulty remembering driving the last few miles

Now, what can alleviate fatigue?

### Improve your sleep

- \* Regimen. Experiment with your sleep schedule: sleep more/less or go to bed later/earlier. Bodies require different schedules for optimal performance. Find yours and stick to it! Changing your schedule can confuse your body and induce fatigue even in the middle of the day.
- \* Environment. Make your sleeping area as comfortable as possible. Adjust the temperature and lighting to suit your preferences, and check for noise and poor ventilation.
- \* Prep. Loosen up your muscles by doing some light stretching before bed. An evening stretching routine will help relax tense muscles that can cause delayed or disturbed sleep.

### Improve your health

- \* Nutrition. A well-balanced diet is the first step to improving your health. Include all of the major food groups in

your diet to help your body function as efficiently as possible.

- \* Exercise. Develop an exercise routine to build your stamina. Muscles, including the heart and lungs, weaken if they are not conditioned regularly, causing them to tire under less stress.
- \* Excess weight. Extra pounds mean extra work, tiring your body more quickly. Whether it is losing a few pounds or building those muscles, find a good balance to reduce the energy you may be losing to fatigued muscles.
- \* Smoking. Although nicotine initially stimulates the body, this reaction subsides into a depressant phase, leaving the body tired. Tobacco smoke has also been linked to many diseases that have been shown to cause fatigue.

### Improve your mind

- \* Time Management. Don't let yourself get stressed out over everything on your "To Do" list. Take a minute to prioritize and develop a plan of action.
- \* Relax. Research and experiment with some relaxation techniques: meditation, biofeedback, autogenic training. These have been shown to improve sleep and reduce emotional stress.
- \* Drink Water. In many cases, fatigue is simply your body telling you it is dehydrated. Although caffeine is often preferred, it can over-stimulate your body and mind, increasing your anxiety. Try substituting a couple of your daily cups of coffee for a bottle of water