

Studies show that 28% of truckers are at risk for sleep apnea, because of the lifestyle. According to Today's Trucking Magazine, American trucking firms are now offering sleep apnea screening and treatment, and are seeing a 30% reduction in incidents due to fatigue after treatment. Untreated sleep apnea leaves your company and/or your employees vulnerable to risk. According to the Consumer Law Page (<http://consumer-lawpage.com/article/sleep-apnea-truck-accident.html>) "Anyone who drives, knowing that they suffer from sleep apnea, is acting recklessly and in conscious disregard for the safety of others. Any trucking company that employs drivers without screening them for sleep apnea is equally reckless. Both should

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be liable for punitive damages for their contempt for public safety, in addition to being responsible for the deaths, injuries and destruction caused by their misconduct."

80% of people with sleep apnea are unidentified and untreated. Estimates say that treating all US drivers who suffer from sleep apnea could potentially save 980 lives per year, and \$11.1 Billion in medical costs and insurance claims.

If your spouse complains that you snore too loud, or even has to go sleep in another room, consider getting yourself checked out. It doesn't hurt, it doesn't even bother that much, and you'll feel better for it. As for me and Darth, well, that'll be Mrs Vander to you. And for Christmas we're going to get a couple of those deely-bopper head bands with the spring antennas on them, and scare the @*# ! out of the grandkids! But at least we'll be feeling good while we do it. Remember, driving if you have sleep apnea is unsafe – and we all know that unsafe is unacceptable. ■



BC Forest Safety Council Warns Winter Driving Conditions Require Better Driving Habits

With frosty weather beginning to hit parts of the province, the BC Forest Safety Council is reminding all drivers to adopt safe winter driving practices.

MaryAnne Arcand, director of the Council's Forestry TruckSafe and Northern Initiatives program, says a number of crashes over the fall season were attributed to changing weather conditions combined with drivers not taking extra precautions.

"Complacency and overlooking simple driving tools and techniques is what gets people hurt," says Arcand. "If we all drive according to the season, we can make it safer for everyone on the roads."

Safe winter driving habits recommended by the Forest Safety Council include:

- slowing down, and giving yourself more time to get where you need to go
- leaving extra space between you and the vehicle in front of you
- using headlights at all times because of shorter daylight hours and potential foggy weather
- replacing windshield wipers because streaky, patchy, partially cleared windows add to drivers' risk

- cleaning off all lights, windows and mirrors in order to see and be seen

Arcand also recommends drivers equip their vehicles with proper snow tires and, especially in the case of truck drivers, carry chains. From October 1 to April 30, it is mandatory for transport trucks to carry chains and the fine for non-compliance is \$121 as well as two points against a driver's license.

"None of us look forward to winter driving conditions, so we put off using season-appropriate driving practices for as long as possible," says Arcand. "No more denial, it's time to change our thinking and adopt safe winter driving habits."

To find out more information about forestry health and safety and the BC Forest Safety Council visit the Council's web site at www.bcforestsafe.org.

The BC Forest Safety Council is a not-for-profit society dedicated to promoting forest health and safety. It was founded and is supported by all major forestry organizations in BC and works with forestry employers, workers, contractors and the provincial government and agencies to implement changes necessary to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries in the forest sector. ■