

# FATIGUE, EXTENDED WORK HOURS AND WORKPLACE SAFETY

**FATIGUE IS INFLUENCED BY EXTENDED WORK HOURS, TOUGH PHYSICAL OR MENTAL ACTIVITIES AND LOSS OF SLEEP. FATIGUE AFFECTS PEOPLE DIFFERENTLY.**

- THE HAZARDS OF FATIGUE
- THE EFFECTS OF FATIGUE
- HOW TO CONTROL FATIGUE



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# FATIGUE, EXTENDED WORK HOURS AND WORKPLACE SAFETY



## WHAT ARE THE HAZARDS OF FATIGUE AND EXTENDED WORK HOURS TO WORKERS?

- Reducing mental and physical functioning
- Impairing judgement and concentration
- Lowering motivation
- Slowing reaction time
- Increasing risk-taking behaviour

## WHAT EFFECTS COULD WORKERS EXPERIENCE FROM FATIGUE?

A worker may experience sleep deprivation if small amounts of sleep loss add up over a long period of time or if a worker misses a lot of sleep in a short period of time. Sleep deprivation can cause a worker to briefly fall asleep unintentionally which distracts the worker's attention from their job and can cause a safety hazard.

## HOW CAN WORKERS BE PROTECTED FROM FATIGUE?

### BE AWARE OF HOW TIME OF DAY AFFECTS FATIGUE

Most major workplace incidents happen between 12am and 6am and between 1pm and 3pm. Biologically, humans tend to be naturally tired during these times. When possible, schedule safety-sensitive tasks or highly attentive tasks outside these times.

### FOCUS ON SHORT TASKS

Fatigue may be temporarily overcome by performing brief tasks lasting between two and five minutes.

### MAINTAIN CONSISTENCY IN WORK SCHEDULE

Keeping a work schedule consistent can make it easier to maintain a sleep schedule and avoid sleep loss.

### BE AWARE THAT SHIFT SCHEDULES AFFECT SLEEP LOSS

Research shows night-shift workers and workers whose shifts start before 6am sleep less than day-shift workers. It's important for workers to be aware of this so they can catch-up on sleep loss and avoid the cumulative effects of fatigue.

### ENCOURAGE MAINTENANCE OF HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS AND SLEEP QUALITY.

People generally require seven to nine hours of sleep per night. Eliminate exposure to noise, light, uncomfortable temperatures or sleep surfaces. Caffeine, alcohol, some prescription drugs and sleeping illnesses, like sleep apnea, can also reduce sleep quality.



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