



SAFETY ALERT

Worker fell asleep whilst driving

ZH Alert No: STE 005

Date of Issue: 27 February 2013

WHAT HAPPENED:

Our Apprentice was travelling home from work after an 8 hour night shift. He fell asleep behind the wheel and was involved in a motor vehicle accident.



WHY DID IT HAPPEN (DIRECT CAUSE):

The night shift was from 9:00pm Sunday night and finished at 6:00am Monday morning. Our apprentice could not sleep through the day on Sunday because he was not tired. At the conclusion of the night shift on Monday morning our apprentice drove his vehicle when fatigued. He felt the signs of fatigue however did not stop his vehicle. He wound down his window and turned the stereo up. He then fell asleep at the wheel.

Contributing Factors:

- Not enough rest between night shifts
- Worker continuing to drive even after noticing the signs of fatigue

Corrective Actions Required:

- Notification to all workers working shift work to ensure they get enough sleep between shifts
- Instruction to all workers on recognising the signs of fatigue and
- Instruction to all workers on what to do when they are fatigued

Key Learning's:

- Ensure enough sleep when working night shifts
- If you are feeling fatigued please stop the vehicle and tell somebody
- Driver fatigue happens on short trips as well as long journeys

Stop.... Revive.... Survive

If you have a micro sleep travelling at 100km per hour you will travel 100 meters in 4 seconds whilst unconscious



1300 apprentice

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Driver Fatigue.....Wake up to the signs

Do not ignore the warning signs of driver fatigue:

- Yawning
- Poor Concentration
- Tired eyes
- Restlessness
- Drowsiness
- Slow reactions
- Boredom
- Oversteering and
- Unable to maintain your speed

The above are all symptoms of driver fatigue. If you start to recognise these signs please pull over somewhere safe and **stop.....revive and survive.**

Some facts about driver fatigue

- You are 4 times more likely to have a fatal motor vehicle accident if you're driving between the hours of 10pm and dawn. Reason is that your body is used to sleeping through this time so it is giving you all the signs to sleep.
- Being awake for 17 hours impairs performance to the same level as having a 0.05 blood alcohol content
- Being awake for 20 hours impairs performance to the same level as having a 0.1 blood alcohol content.