Safety Advisor - November 2018

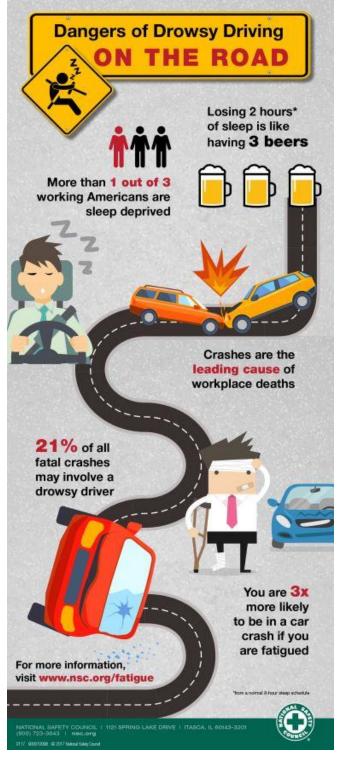**Drowsy Driving Prevention Week begins November 4th.**

According to the American Sleep Foundation, about half of U.S. adult drivers admit to consistently getting behind the wheel while feeling drowsy. An estimated 7,000 people died last year in crashes involving drowsy driving, according to a Governors Highway Safety Association report.

Driving while drowsy is similar to driving under the influence of alcohol:

- Drivers' reaction times, awareness of hazards and ability to sustain attention all worsen the drowsier the driver is
- Driving after going more than 20 hours without sleep is the equivalent of driving with a blood-alcohol concentration of 0.08% – the U.S. legal limit
- You are three times more likely to be in a car crash if you are fatigued

Ways to reduce drowsy driving include:

- **Crash avoidance technologies:** New and existing safety technologies, such as drowsiness alert and lane departure warnings, can detect common drowsy driving patterns and warn drivers to stay in their lane or take a break
- **University interventions:** College students receive less than average sleep, with some estimates at less than six hours a night; education programs aimed at college students may help curb drowsy driving and instill healthier behaviors that can last into adulthood
- **Getting more sleep:** According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the Sleep Research Society, adults should get seven or more hours of sleep each night
- **Medication labels:** A recent article by *Consumer Reports* found that side effects warnings are not always clear; new labeling guidelines may help drivers understand when to drive or not drive after taking these medications
- **Employers:** Workplaces can include key information on getting sufficient sleep and refraining from driving drowsy

For Safety Tips about Drowsy Driving, please contact us at NMMSafetyAdvisor@NewMexicoMutual.com, or go to http://www.nsc.org/learn/NSC-Initiatives/Pages/Fatigue.aspx