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SAFETY BULLETIN



F M C S A
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration



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FMCSA committees formally recommend requiring truckers with high BMI to be screened for sleep apnea

FMCSA's Medical Review Board and Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee officially approved recommendations regarding sleep apnea screening for truck drivers. Some criteria would automatically disqualify drivers from receiving their medical certification, while others would allow drivers to receive conditional certification; pending a sleep study and treatment of sleep apnea should they be diagnosed.

Two FMCSA advisory committees this week stamped their approval on recommendations to the agency regarding which truck drivers should be screened for obstructive sleep apnea before being cleared to drive.

The final version of the recommendations retains the conditional criteria to refer drivers for sleep apnea testing, based mostly around their BMI and other factors that could indicate obstructive sleep apnea. FMCSA's Medical Review Board and its Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee voted to approve the recommendations



Time to Fall Back.....Daylight Savings Time Change in Two Weeks!!

Daylight savings time will "fall back" at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 6th.

Make sure that all of your drivers are aware that the change to daylight savings will occur. Caution route drivers especially that the amount of daylight will change according

Tuesday, Oct. 25.

Truck operators with a Body Mass Index of 40 or higher would be flagged for sleep apnea screening if the recommendations are made law. Those truckers would receive a 90-day medical certification, during which time they must have an in-lab sleep study. If diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea, they would need to begin treatment within the 90-day period.

Truckers with a BMI of 33 or higher would also be subject to screening if they meet three other qualifiers, a list that includes being male and being older than 42 — a large demographic in the trucking industry. Such drivers would receive the same 90-day certification aforementioned and must receive an in-lab sleep study during that time.

Male truckers age 42 and older who have a BMI of 33 or greater would be flagged for a sleep test if they also have high blood pressure, have diabetes, have history of heart disease, snore loudly, have witnessed apneas or have a neck size greater than 17 inches, among other qualifiers.

Drivers diagnosed with moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnea could receive a medical certification from their examiner that lasts no longer than a year, rather than the standard two-year certification.

The Oct. 25-finalized recommendations are simply recommendations and bear no legal weight. However, FMCSA likely will lean heavily on the criteria when developing a sleep apnea screening rule.

Notable changes to the final document approved Oct. 25 center on the immediate disqualification criteria. Truckers who meet the following would be immediately disqualified from driving by their medical examiner and would be referred for a sleep test:

- Report excessive sleepiness while driving
- Experience a crash associated with falling asleep
- Been observed sleeping behind the wheel while operating the vehicle
- Found non-compliant with proper treatment of existing obstructive sleep apnea

The recommendations would also give medical examiners the discretion to “disqualify any driver who appears to be extremely high risk,” according to the document.

Truckers sidelined by the immediate disqualifications would remain out of service until they begin treatment for apnea. Per the recommendations, truckers would need to be treated for two weeks to requalify to drive. They would then receive a 90-day certification.

Treatment options included in the committee recommendations include the use of a

to their stops with the change. An intersection or street can present different challenges to drivers with one hour change in the position of the sun. One hour of time difference can present unique changes to a driver who is on a route.

**SLEEP SMART.
DRIVE SMART.**
DROWSY DRIVING KILLS

November 6-13 is Drowsy Driving Prevention Week

The National Sleep Foundation has launched Drowsy Driving Prevention week as an educational campaign designed to save lives by increasing awareness of the dangers of driving while sleepy. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that drowsy driving causes at least 100,000 police-reported crashes and kills more than 1,550 Americans each year. It is curious that all states have laws in place to enforce drunken driving but few have laws to cite a driver who has fallen asleep causing an accident. Only the state of New Jersey explicitly defines drowsy driving as recklessness under a vehicular homicide statute. Known as "Maggie's Law," New Jersey's drowsy driving law has served to raise awareness of the consequences of fatigue behind the wheel and has spurred significant action in other states. There are now at least 8 states with 12 pending bills that address fatigued driving in various ways.

For more information on Drowsy Driving Prevention

continuous positive airway pressure machine and various surgeries intended to treat the condition.

Testing options include both in-lab and at-home tests, but a certified sleep specialist must review the findings from either test. Medical examiners must then sign off on the diagnosis, too.

Below is the full list of conditional criteria spelled out by the FMCSA committees. If a driver has a BMI of 33 or higher and meets three of the following, he or she would be referred for sleep apnea:

- older than 42
- is male or postmenopausal female
- has diabetes, has high blood pressure
- has a neck size greater than 17 inches (males) or 15.5 inches (females)
- has a history of heart disease
- snores loudly
- has witnessed apneas
- has a small airway
- has untreated hypothyroidism, or
- has micrognathia or retrognathia

(CCJ article James Jaillet Oct 26,2016)

Appeals Court upholds carrier policy to screen for sleep apnea based on BMI

A U.S. Court of Appeals has upheld a motor carrier's policy requiring screening for obstructive sleep apnea for all drivers with a Body Mass Index of 35 or higher.

[*Parker v. Crete Carrier Corp.*](#), No. 16-1371, U.S. Ct. of App. Eighth Circuit, decided October 12, 2016.

The plaintiff driver refused the required medical examination, and the carrier stopped giving him work. The driver, who had a valid medical certificate, then sued the carrier, claiming a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The court's decision affirmed a lower court ruling that the carrier's policy requiring a particular class of employees to get a medical exam did not violate the ADA, as it was job-related and a business necessity.

The court noted that Crete established the following facts, which the driver did not contradict: Untreated obstructive sleep apnea tends to impair driving skills, increasing the risk of motor vehicle accidents by 1.2- to 4.9-fold. A sleep study is the only way to confirm or rule out an obstructive sleep apnea diagnosis. An in-lab sleep study is the gold standard for diagnosing obstructive sleep apnea. Obesity is the primary anatomic risk factor for obstructive sleep apnea. A BMI of approximately 33 is the optimal cut-off to identify subjects likely to have obstructive sleep apnea. Screening with a BMI above 33 has a sensitivity of 76.9% (meaning 76.9% of people with obstructive sleep apnea have a BMI above 33) and a specificity of 70.5%

Week, visit

www.drowsydriving.org.

WARNING SIGNS OF DROWSINESS & FATIGUE:

If you:

- can't remember the last few miles driven
- have wandering or disconnected thoughts
- experience difficulty focusing or keeping your eyes open
- have trouble keeping your head up
- drift from lanes or hit a rumble strip
- yawn repeatedly
- tailgate or miss traffic signs
- find yourself jerking your vehicle back into lane....

Then you may be suffering from drowsiness or fatigue.

Continuing to drive in this condition puts you at serious risk of being involved in a fatigue-related crash. You should pull over in a safe place and get some rest before resuming your trip.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO STAY ALERT WHILE DRIVING:

Sleep / Take naps: Your best bet is to get enough sleep every day. If you must stay up late, afternoon naps are a great way to get more sleep. If you feel drowsy while driving, a 15-minute nap can be very effective. Make sure to pull over in a safe place.

Caffeine: Avoid caffeine during the last half of your workday as

(meaning 70.5% of people who do not have the condition do not have a BMI above 33). Obstructive sleep apnea can be treated, decreasing the risk of motor vehicle accidents.

Preventing driver injuries in Fall and Winter

Slip/Trip and Fall injuries are the most common type of injury for drivers. Most of them occur during the winter months. Each year, thousands of professional drivers are seriously injured due to not paying attention in winter conditions. Working in the ice and snow requires your full attention and awareness.

- Remember it is our primary goal that you go home to your family and friends the way you came to work today, safe and healthy.
- Always wear proper footwear. A full support leather shoe with a rugged non-slip sole. Use non-slip covers on shoe (Yak Trax, etc.)
- SLOW DOWN, never be in a hurry.
- Always watch where you walk. Snow can accumulate on top of ice in and around truck parking areas.
- Take small steps and check your footing with each step.
- Look for ice on all handrails and hand grabs before using them.
- ALWAYS use gloves for better grip.
- ALWAYS use three points of contacts when exiting/entering your tractor or trailer or getting on the cat walk behind the cab, ALWAYS.
- Always use your seat belt.
- SLOW DOWN!
- Slow Down in winter!



Halloween driving "Tricks" to keep everyone safe

To help everyone bring home treats — not tragedies — follow these tips for a safe Halloween:

- Focus on your driving. A single distraction could lead to a tragedy.
- Stay well below the posted speed limit.
- Pay attention to what's happening on sidewalks and roadways. Watch for

it may contribute to sleeping problems. You can gain short-term alertness by drinking coffee or other caffeine sources if driving, but it usually takes 30 minutes to take affect and wears off after a few hours.

Regular stops: You should stop every 100 miles or 2 hours. Switch drivers if you can.

AC MAX – Recirculation: Do not operate the vehicle for extended periods of time with the AC on MAX or Recirculation. Under these conditions the level of CO2 in the vehicle is increased contributing to drowsy driving.

Avoid Alcohol: If you have been drinking, please don't drive! In addition to being illegal, alcohol makes you sleepy and amplifies your fatigue.

If you are planning a long trip, AAA offers the following tips for avoiding fatigue:

- Prepare for your trip by getting a good night's sleep the night before. Plan to drive during the time that you are normally awake, and stay overnight rather than traveling straight through.
- Avoid driving during the body's "down time". According to AAA, this is generally in the mid-afternoon and between midnight and 6:00 a.m.
- If you have passengers, talk to them. It will help to keep you alert, and they will also be able to tell if you are showing signs of

children darting across streets, especially between parked cars.

- Be extra alert when pulling in and out of driveways.
- Do not assume children can see you or are paying attention. You need to take that responsibility.
- Drivers should also check that all lights on their car work.
- Do not pass other vehicles that have stopped in the roadway. They could be dropping off children.
- If you're driving a group of children, but staying in the running vehicle at the curb, be sure to put on your hazard lights to alert other motorists.
- And if you're driving to a Halloween party, put that mask on after you park the car.

Parents can help motorists, too:

- Make sure drivers can see the children. Give them flashlights and glow sticks. Dress kids in bright, reflective clothing or use reflective tape on their costumes.
- Use makeup, rather than masks, so children have a clear, unobstructed view of their surroundings.
- Be sure children know how to cross a street -- look left, right and left again before crossing.
- Instruct children to stay on sidewalks and to cross only at corners or crosswalks.
- Accompany your children as they trick or treat.

getting sleepy.

- Schedule a break every 2 hours or every 100 miles. Take a nap, stretch, take a walk and get some exercise before resuming your trip.
- Stop sooner if you show any danger signs of sleepiness.

"TRICKS" THAT DO NOT WORK

Opening the window, turning on the air conditioning, or playing loud music are not effective in keeping drivers alert for any extended period of time



Proper steps to take in preparing for Winter driver conditions

As I looked at the weather forecast for this week it is evident that this will be the first "Snow" event for an area of the US. Upper Michigan through upstate NY and onto

the Northeastern states will receive some accumulation of snow this week. Have your drivers take the time now to review the following steps to prepare for these types of driving conditions.

Step 1: Make sure that your truck is prepared for winter driving.

Tires are the most important aspect of keeping your vehicle under control in snow and ice condition. Traction tires on the drive axle(s) of the truck with ample tread depth provides the best control in snow and ice conditions. The tread depth and condition of the steer axle tires is also vital in keeping the control of the steering. If you are operating in areas with chain laws make sure the chains are in good condition and ready to be installed if needed. Mirrors and all glass in the truck should be clean for maximum visibility.

Step 2: Lights On.

Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.

Step 3: No Cruise Control.

Don't use cruise control on snowy or icy roads.

Step 4: Bridges, Overpasses infrequently traveled roads.

Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads, which will freeze first. Even at temperatures above freezing, if the conditions are wet, you might encounter ice in shady areas or on exposed roadways like bridges.

Step 5: Don't "pump" the brakes.

If your truck is equipped with ABS brakes do not "pump" the brakes.

Step 6: Drive slowly.

Driving too quickly is the main cause of winter accidents. Just because you are a large truck with a heavy load doesn't mean that you're invincible, be sure to drive slowly and carefully on snow and ice covered roads.

Step 7: Pay attention.

Maneuvers are more difficult to make in the snow. Be sure to anticipate what your next move is going to be to give yourself lots of room for turns and stopping.

Step 9: Don't tailgate.

While tailgating is a bad idea under normal driving conditions, it is much, much worse in winter weather. Stopping takes much longer on snowy and icy roads than on dry pavement. Be sure to leave a lot of room between your vehicle and the one in front of you. A good rule of thumb is to leave four vehicle lengths between you and the vehicle in front of you for every 10 mph you are driving.

Step 10: Brake before making turns.

It is difficult to steer vehicles while applying the brakes in snowy conditions. So make sure to smoothly step on your truck's brakes to reduce speed before entering turns. Once you have rounded the corner you can accelerate again.

Step 11: Drive smoothly.

Snowy and icy roads are much less forgiving than dry pavement. Make sure not to make any abrupt turns or stops when driving. Doing so will often cause your vehicle to lose control and skid out.

Step 12: Be familiar with your vehicle.

It is always a good idea to be familiar with your vehicle's driving dynamics. This is especially true when driving on snow or ice. Also, be aware of the weight condition of your truck. As your load and weight diminish the handling of the truck in snow and ice will change.

Step 13: Learn how to control skids.

While it is best practiced in a driving school or on a closed course, it is not a bad idea to practice controlling skids in your vehicle so that you know how to react if it ever happens under real world driving conditions. When skidding, you actually need to go against your natural instincts and turn into the skid and accelerate. Taking your foot off of the brakes and accelerating gently during skids transfers your vehicle's weight from the front to the rear and often helps vehicles to regain control.

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