



Safety Bulletin [Allergy Medications Can Impair Drivers \(/safety-bulletins/allergy-medications-can-impair-drivers\)](#) has been updated.



ALLERGY MEDICATIONS CAN IMPAIR DRIVERS

Driving Under the Influence - Of Allergy Medicine

Spring will arrive on Saturday March 20th in the U.S., bringing along a slew of seasonal allergies. Experts suggest that the 2021 allergy season could be more severe in comparison to previous years.



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With allergy season officially starting, you should be aware that some over-the-counter allergy drugs can seriously impair your ability to drive a Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV).

[University of Iowa \(https://uiowa.edu/\)](https://uiowa.edu/) researchers who tested allergy sufferers in a driving stimulator found that the antihistamine diphenhydramine (found in many allergy and cold medications) significantly impaired a driver's ability to follow, steer, and maintain the correct lane. The study showed that diphenhydramine has more significant impact on driving performance than alcohol does.

Researchers said that of the 39 million Americans who suffer from hay fever and allergies only 4.8 million take prescription medications. The remainders of these folks go without treatment or take over-the-counter medications. These medications may be effective, but they often come with warnings stating drowsiness may occur and to use caution when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery.

Researchers say even if you do not feel drowsy on allergy medications, you can still be impaired.

When drivers take over the counter medications, they often forget that the medication has effects on their cognitive and motor abilities. It does not usually cross their minds that they are taking a drug and will be impaired. Even if they read the warning, it is common to assume that it only applies a few certain people and that "do not operate heavy machinery" means farm equipment or tractors, forgetting that CMV's should be included as well. Also, many drugs carry warnings about drowsiness or dizziness that people ignore. However, this is a serious problem that leads to thousands of vehicle crashes each year.



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The danger of getting behind the wheel of a CMV when a driver is too tired to drive can be fatal.

Drugs impair our bodies in a variety of ways. They may blur our vision; make us tired or too excited; alter depth perception; make us see or hear things that may not be there; raise or lower blood pressure; react too quickly, too slowly, or not at all. They cause problems with concentrating on the task at hand. These problems can result from taking any type of drug: illegal, prescription or over the counter. When our brain function is altered, our muscle and nerve function changes.

Antihistamines, which block allergic reactions, slow down reaction time and impair coordination.

Over-the-counter decongestants can cause drowsiness, anxiety, and dizziness. Drowsy driving is responsible for an estimated 100,000 traffic crashes and about 1,500 deaths every year, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Common prescription drugs (including medications to treat allergies, pain, diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol, ulcers, depression, anxiety disorders, and insomnia) can cause drowsiness, affect vision and other skills that can be serious hazards on the road.

Tranquilizers, sedatives, and sleeping pills slow down the central nervous system causing drowsiness and diminished reaction time and impairing the ability to concentrate.

Over-the-counter drugs such as cold and cough medicines, antihistamines, drugs to prevent nausea or motion sickness, pain relievers, decongestants, and diuretics can cause drowsiness or dizziness that can impair a driver's skills and reflexes.

Some drugs may make you feel alert and confident in your driving. In reality, the situation may be quite different. Drugs can fool you into believing you are in control of your driving when you are, in fact, impaired.

Here is a partial list of legal drugs that can, in the right amount, impair your ability to drive.



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- Anti-anxiety medication
- Amphetamines
- Barbiturates
- Stimulants
- Narcotic pain medications
- Allergy medicines
- Blood sugar medicines
- Antidepressants
- Tranquilizers
- Blood pressure medicines
- Motion sickness medication
- Ulcer medication
- Antibiotics
- Anti-seizure medicines
- Paregoric
- Anti-nausea medicine
- Sedatives
- Cough syrups
- Alcohol-containing medicines
- Caffeine-containing medicines
- Decongestants

To avoid harming yourself or others, partner with your physician and pharmacist to learn information regarding your medication's side effects, and what drugs are usually safe to combine—especially behind the wheel. Never take more than the prescribed dose, or take anyone else's medicine. Ask for non-sedating forms of your prescriptions if you are a professional driver. Allow your body time to adjust to new medications before you drive. Most importantly, each of us is responsible for knowing the signs and symptoms of being drug impaired before we get behind the wheel of any vehicle.

For more information including side effects of any drug visit www.drugs.com (<http://www.drugs.com>).

International Roadcheck Set for May 4-6 with Emphasis on Lighting and Hours of Service



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The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) (<https://www.cvsa.org/>) has set May 4-6 as the dates for this year's [International Roadcheck](https://www.cvsa.org/programs/international-roadcheck/). Over that 72-hour period, commercial motor vehicle inspectors in jurisdictions throughout Canada, Mexico and the U.S. will conduct inspections on commercial motor vehicles and drivers.

Each year, CVSA asks its member jurisdictions to capture and report data focusing on a certain category of violations during International Roadcheck. This helps bring awareness to certain aspects of a roadside inspection. This year, inspectors will capture data on two categories, corresponding to the two main inspection categories of the North American Standard Level I Inspection – driver operating requirements and vehicle mechanical fitness. For the driver category, hours of service will be highlighted this year, and for the vehicle category, inspectors will be paying special attention to lighting.

According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the lighting violation “lamps inoperable” (Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations 393.9) was the number one vehicle violation in fiscal 2020, accounting for approximately 12.24% of all vehicle violations discovered that year. And during last year’s International Roadcheck, the top driver out-of-service violation category in North America was hours of service, accounting for 34.7% of all driver out-of-service conditions.

International Roadcheck is a CVSA program with participation by the [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration \(https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/\)](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/), the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, Transport Canada, and Mexico’s Ministry of Communications and Transportation and its National Guard.

Canada to Start ELD Educational Enforcement on June 12

[Transport Canada \(https://tc.canada.ca/en\)](https://tc.canada.ca/en) has issued a notice stating that the agency will not penalize motor carriers for failing to adopt electronic logging devices as of the June 12, 2021 deadline. Instead, the Minister of Transport said agency will work together with industry to create a “progressive enforcement period” on adoption of ELDs. According to the [Private Motor Truck Council of Canada \(http://www.pmtc.ca/home/\)](http://www.pmtc.ca/home/), this means there will be an education and awareness campaign on ELD adoption for the first six months at least.



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A statement from [Canada’s Minister of Transport Omar Alghabra \(https://pm.gc.ca/en/cabinet/honourable-omar-alghabra\)](https://pm.gc.ca/en/cabinet/honourable-omar-alghabra) announced the educational enforcement period and notes, “with the support of provinces and territories, and in consultation with industry, we will work together on the successful and effective implementation of a progressive enforcement period. This will give sufficient time for industry to obtain and install certified electronic logging devices without penalty as of June 12, 2021. Early enforcement measures will consist of education and awareness.” In his statement, the minister also acknowledged the impact COVID-19 has had on commercial vehicle operations. While ELD enforcement will be educational to start, the minister still encouraged carriers to implement certified ELDs as soon as possible.

Many trucking industry groups and associations in Canada were pushing for an enforcement delay due to COVID-19 and the fact that — with just a few months until the mandate effective date — there

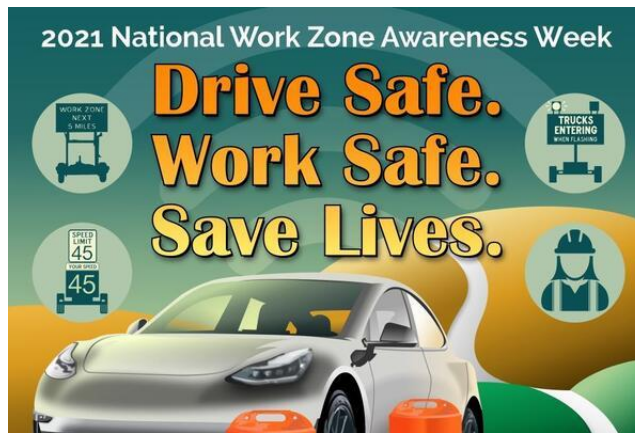
had yet to be any certified ELDs available.

Although Transport Canada had mandated that all motor carriers use ELDs when operating inter-provincial or international traffic in Canada as of the June 12 deadline, the agency had failed to designate any ELD as approved for use. Under the TC regulations, all ELDs in use in Canada must be approved by a third-party certification entity, but no devices have been certified for use to date. Thus, it impossible to comply with the Transport Canada requirements for ELDs at present.

Canada's ELD mandate applies to federally regulated carriers in Canada as well as U.S.-based carriers operating into Canada.

Visit [Canadian ELD Standard FAQ's \(https://www.ccmta.ca/en/canadian-eld-standard/canadian-eld-standard-faq-s\)](https://www.ccmta.ca/en/canadian-eld-standard/canadian-eld-standard-faq-s) to learn more.

National Work Zone Awareness Week April 26-30



[https://www.idealease.com/sites/default/files/styles/extra_large/public/itok=ctXp-B-p\)](https://www.idealease.com/sites/default/files/styles/extra_large/public/itok=ctXp-B-p)

National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) is an annual spring campaign held at the start of construction season to encourage safe driving through highway work zones and construction sites. The key message is for drivers to use extra caution in work zones. For more information, check out <http://www.nwzaw.org> (<http://www.nwzaw.org>)



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“Spring Forward” to Daylight Savings this Sunday March 14th!

Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 14, 2021 at 2:00 A.M. On Saturday night, set your clocks forward one hour (i.e., losing one hour) to “spring ahead.”

Caution route drivers especially that the amount of daylight will change according to their stops with the change.

Also, remember to change the batteries in smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors as well.

Most sleep experts recommend a minimum of 7 hours of sleep a night. Many people sleep an average of 40 minutes less Sunday night, March 14th after Daylight Saving Time returns. Plan to avoid being sleepy. Sleep in Sunday morning and nap Sunday afternoon.

24/7 ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE
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