Fatigue on the Job Stats and Facts



FACTS

1. Fatigue is defined as being in a state of physical or mental exhaustion, which compromises both workplace safety and a worker's ability to perform efficiently.
2. There are three causes of fatigue: sleep loss, disruption of a person's body clock, and prolonged mental or physical activity.
3. Fatigue can reduce a worker's alertness, leading to errors and an increased possibility of injury under these two conditions: either when operating equipment or vehicles, or when performing important tasks requiring considerable concentration.
4. Seven long-term health effects of fatigue include increased risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, gastrointestinal disorders, diabetes, anxiety, depression, and reduced fertility. (Safe Work Australia)
5. A University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine study found that fatigued workers had nearly twice the risk for injury compared to non-fatigued workers.
6. Five symptoms indicating that a worker is experiencing fatigue include excessive yawning or falling asleep at work; impaired decision-making ability; short-term memory impairment and reduced concentration; slowed reflexes and reduced hand-eye coordination; and a noticeable decrease in one's ability to communicate clearly.

STATS

- According to the National Safety Council, more than 43 percent of workers are sleep-deprived. Predictably, the problem is even worse for workers who do shift work or take the night shifts – 62 percent of them complain about sleep loss.
- Research has shown that the number of hours awake can be similar to blood alcohol levels:
    - 17 hours awake is equivalent to a blood alcohol content of 0.05
    - 21 hours awake is equivalent to a blood alcohol content of 0.08 (legal limit in Canada)
    - 24-25 hours awake is equivalent to a blood alcohol content of 0.10