

Client Services Update



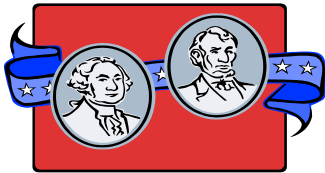
February 2006

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USERRA UPDATE

The US Department of Labor recently published updated interpretations of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). USERRA prohibits discrimination against past and present members of the uniformed services and establishes "prompt" reemployment rights for service men and women who want to return to the jobs that they held prior to being called up for duty. In general, returning service personnel must be reemployed in the job that they would have attained if they had not been on military leave. This includes the same seniority, status, and pay, as well as other rights and benefits determined by seniority. For example, if it is reasonably certain that the employee would have been promoted had he or she not been absent, the employee would be entitled to that promotion upon reinstatement. There are additional requirements that ensure that returning service personnel receive benefits, particularly health insurance coverage, and training or retraining in order to refresh or upgrade skills to qualify them to return to the civilian workforce. Additional information, including a downloadable poster, is available at www.dol.gov. An informational handout on USERRA is downloadable from the Fleet Safety website - www.fleet-safety.com, in the client resources section.

Fatigue Behind the Wheel

The National Sleep Foundation's 2005 Sleep in America poll found that young adult male drivers are at the greatest risk for drowsy driving. According to the poll, males are more likely to drive drowsy than females (38 percent vs. 28 percent), and nearly one-half of drivers 18-29 (46 percent) said they have driven drowsy at least once a month in the past year, compared to 39 percent of drivers 30-49, 30 percent of those 50-64, and 14 percent of drivers 65+. In fact, 24 hours without sleep has a similar effect to a blood alcohol concentration of 0.10 percent, more than the legal threshold for drunken driving in many states. Long stretches behind the wheel, coupled with lack of sleep, can cause severe impairment - at least 15% of all heavy truck crashes involve fatigue.

There are several signs to indicate fatigue while driving, though many people may not associate the symptoms with fatigue or sleepiness and continue to drive when they should stop. Here are some signs that should tell a driver to stop and rest:

- Difficulty focusing, frequent blinking, or heavy eyelids,
- Trouble keeping your head up,
- Yawning repeatedly,
- Trouble remembering the last few miles driven; missing exits or traffic signs,
- Drifting from your lane, tailgating, or hitting a shoulder rumble strip,

It is important to recognize these signs and find a safe place to stop. Caffeine from coffee or energy drinks can promote short-term alertness, but it takes about 30 minutes for caffeine to enter the bloodstream; take a 15-20 minute nap while waiting for the caffeine to kick in. There is no replacement for a good night's sleep! Information about drowsy driving can be found at NSF's drowsy driving website: www.drowsydriving.org. Additional information about sleep and sleep disorders can be found at: www.sleepfoundation.org.

**First Quarter Random Testing Must Be Completed By March 24, 2006
Don't forget to Fax or Mail copies of Alcohol Tests to Fleet Safety at:
Fleet Safety Services, 18 John Street Place, Worcester MA 01609
Fax: 508 8431 7611 or 508 459 4805**

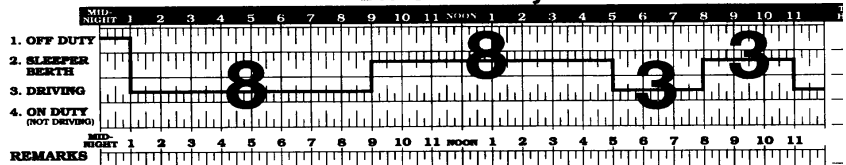
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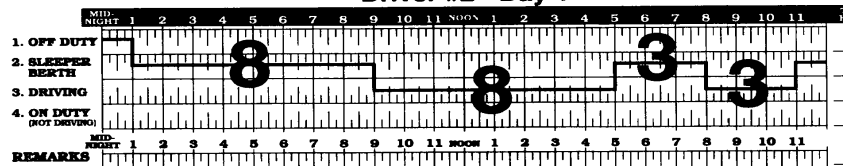
The IDEAL Hours of Service Patterns for Team Operations

Team drivers can use the new HOS sleeper berth requirements to their advantage. By splitting their required off-duty time into two separate breaks, team drivers can trade off the driving task (one drives while one sleeps) and keep the vehicle moving right up to their 60/70 hour limits. Team drivers each have to obtain at least 8 consecutive hours in the sleeper berth for one of the two required breaks. It is no longer legal for drivers to use the "5 hours on, 5 hours off" pattern. For this reason, many teams may choose to operate on a "10 off, 14 on" schedule and not use the split-sleeper option. These examples show what may be the "ideal" pattern for team drivers to use.

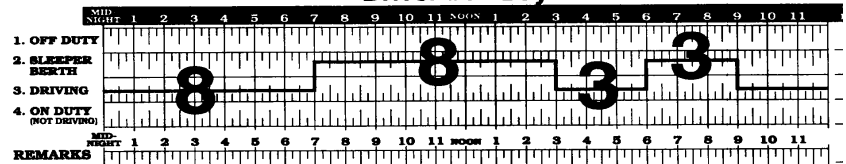
Driver #1 - Day 1



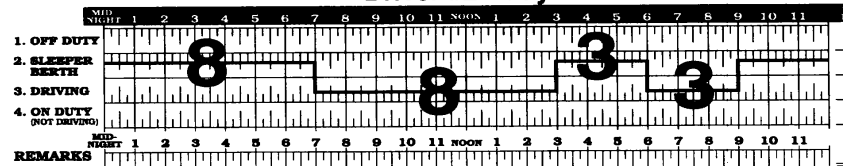
Driver #2 - Day 1



Driver #1 - Day 2



Driver #2 - Day 2



Peppermint & Cinnamon Lower Drivers' Frustration, Increase Alertness

The scent of peppermint or cinnamon may keep you more alert and decrease your frustration when you're behind the wheel. That's according to the results of a recent study led by Dr. Bryan Raudenbush, Director of Undergraduate Research and associate professor of psychology at Wheeling Jesuit University in Wheeling, WV. According to the study, both cinnamon and peppermint led to increased ratings of alertness and lower frustration. Cinnamon also decreased drivers' fatigue ratings. Dr. Raudenbush and WJU students Trevor Cessna, Will Esgro, and Ricky Yahn will present the results of the study, "Effects Of Odor Administration On Driving Performance, Safety, Alertness, And Fatigue," during the 2006 Third Annual Undergraduate Research Day, February 1, in Charleston, WV.

The study builds on Dr. Raudenbush's past research, which indicated the odors of peppermint and cinnamon enhance motivation, performance, and alertness, decrease fatigue, and serve as central nervous system stimulants. "Given these results, it is reasonable to expect that the presentation of peppermint or cinnamon odor while driving may produce a more alert and conscientious driver, and minimize the fatigue associated with prolonged driving," says Dr. Raudenbush. "In general, prolonged driving led to increased anger, fatigue, and physical demand, and decreased vigor. However, fatigue ratings were decreased in the cinnamon condition. Both cinnamon and peppermint administration led to increased ratings of alertness in comparison to the no-odor control condition over the course of the driving scenario. Periodic administration of these odors over long term driving may prove beneficial in maintaining alertness and decreasing highway accidents and fatalities," says Dr. Raudenbush.

Results summary:

- Peppermint is associated with decreased anxiety while driving.
- Peppermint is associated with decreased fatigue while driving.
- Peppermint and cinnamon are associated with decreased driving frustration.
- Peppermint and cinnamon are associated with decreased temporal demand while driving.
- Peppermint and cinnamon are associated with greater levels of driving alertness.

Grants from NSF and NASA supported the research.

(reprinted from Safety Clicks)