

November 2022 CCDC SAFETY MESSAGE

Drowsy Driving Prevention Week is November 6-13, 2022.

The National Sleep Foundation holds Drowsy Driving Prevention Week (DDPW) each year the week following the end of Daylight Saving Time.

The goal of this annual campaign is to reduce the number of drivers who drive while sleep deprived. Drowsy driving is responsible for more than 6,400 U.S. deaths annually. Fall-asleep crashes are often caused by voluntarily not getting the sleep you need.

NSF encourages everyone to prioritize sleep and drive when alert and refreshed.

NSF's drowsy driving prevention resources are available on www.theNSF.org. The following information is from theNSF.org website

One cause of drowsy driving accidents is Microsleep. You may be unfamiliar with the term, but Microsleep is quite common and can be dangerous if it occurs while you are driving a vehicle.

Microsleep is when you fall asleep for a period of several seconds. As the name implies, Microsleep occurs so quickly that people who have an episode might not even realize they have fallen asleep. Microsleep can occur at any time of day, not just at night.

During an episode, you may appear to be awake, and even have your eyes open, but your brain does not process information.

If you are sleep deprived, or if you have a sleep disorder, you are at higher risk for microsleep. Episodes can happen while you are driving a vehicle or operating other heavy machinery, and this is when microsleep becomes precarious. Microsleep can lead to dangerous crashes or running your car off the road. If you are driving at a high speed, the likelihood of a severe crash increases.

It is important that you make sure that you are alert before you get behind the wheel. If you feel drowsy, do not drive. If you find yourself with wandering thoughts, drifting into other lanes, or cannot remember the last few miles you drove, pull over to the side of the road to rest or ask someone else to drive.

The best way to prevent Microsleep is prioritizing getting sleep and making sure you get the right amount of sleep you need to feel refreshed and alert. The National Sleep Foundation recommends 7-9 hours a night for adults, more for teenagers.

You can also use the following techniques to better help you fall asleep at night.

1. Make sure to turn off electronics one hour prior to bed—no texting!
2. Set a relaxing bedtime routine, such as listening to calming music, reading a book, or taking a warm bath.
3. Avoid caffeine in the late afternoon and evening.
4. If you are able, make sure to sleep in a cool, dark room.

THINK SMART, BE AWARE, BE FLEXIBLE, BE EDUATED (SAFE)