

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2020



The old saying, “Trucking moves America forward” has become more and more evident over the past months as over-the-road truck drivers and local couriers risk their own health to keep America stocked during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In an effort to stay healthy, drivers have stated that they are taking extra precautions. Many are more aware of the places they go and everything they touch. More precautions are taken such as face masks, gloves, and extra care to sanitize their vehicles.

As most drivers are putting in longer hours and spending more time away from their families, the American people are trying to show their support and gratitude for these unsung heroes. Many local couriers are finding care packages of hard to find essential items offered to them on the front porches of homeowners.

Concerned citizens are also showing support for over-the-road truck drivers. Social media users are using the hashtag #ThankATrucker to post messages, while billboards line America’s highways with messages of thanks.

The Association of U.S. Professional Drivers would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt gratitude to these front-line workers. We appreciate the sacrifices you make every day, especially during these trying times and hope you, and your families, are safe and well.



ASSOCIATION OF
U.S. PROFESSIONAL
DRIVERS

Driving When You Have Sleep Apnea

Overview

(Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration) - A study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania and sponsored by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and the American Transportation Research Institute of the American Trucking Associations found that almost one-third (28 percent) of commercial truck drivers have mild to severe sleep apnea.

What is Sleep Apnea?

Sleep apnea is a breathing-related sleep disorder that causes brief interruptions of breathing during sleep. These pauses in breathing can last at least 10 seconds or more and can occur up to 400 times a night. Sleep apnea is a serious, potentially life-threatening condition that often goes unrecognized and undiagnosed.

Risk Factors for Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea occurs in all age groups and both sexes, but there are a number of factors that may put some at higher risk:

- A family history of sleep apnea
- Having a small upper airway
- Being overweight
- Having a recessed chin, small jaw, or a large overbite
- A large neck size (17 inches or greater for men, 16 inches or greater for women)
- Smoking and alcohol use
- Being age 40 or older
- Ethnicity

Symptoms of Sleep Apnea

- Loud snoring
- Morning headaches and nausea
- Gasping or choking while sleeping
- Loss of sex drive/impotence
- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Irritability and/or feelings of depression
- Disturbed sleep
- Concentration and memory problems
- Frequent nighttime urination

Diagnosing Sleep Apnea

In order to diagnose sleep apnea, a doctor may require the patient to spend the night at a sleep center, where the patient can be monitored.

How Can Sleep Apnea Affect Driving?

Sleep apnea affects sleep, and may also affect daytime alertness and performance. Untreated sleep apnea can make it difficult to stay awake, focus and react quickly while driving. In general, studies show that people with untreated sleep apnea have an increased risk of being involved in a fatigue-related motor vehicle crash.

Many sleep apnea patients say they never fall asleep while driving. That may be true. But remember, one doesn't need to fall asleep to have a crash. A less alert driver — with untreated sleep apnea; is not as aware as they should be.

Can A Driver With Sleep Apnea Still Drive?

Yes! While FMCSA regulations do not specifically address sleep apnea, they do prescribe that a person with a medical history or clinical diagnosis of any condition likely to interfere with their ability to drive safely cannot be medically qualified to operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in interstate commerce.

However, once successfully treated, a driver may regain their "medically-qualified-to-drive" status. It is important to note that most cases of sleep apnea can be treated successfully.

Each State sets its own medical standards for driving a CMV in intrastate commerce. Check with your local Department of Motor Vehicles for regulations in each State.

What Should Be Done if Diagnosed With Sleep Apnea?

Contact the medical qualifying examiner to determine fitness to operate a commercial motor vehicle and to get help with treatment.

What Level of Sleep Apnea (mild, moderate, severe) Disqualifies a CMV Driver?

The disqualifying level of sleep apnea is moderate to severe, which interferes with safe driving. The medical examiner must qualify and determine a driver's medical fitness for duty.

What are the Obligations of a Motor Carrier Regarding Employees with Sleep Apnea?

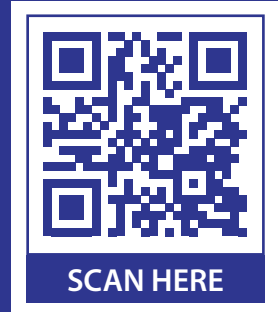
A motor carrier may not require or permit a driver to operate a CMV if the driver has a condition — including sleep apnea — that would affect his or her ability to safely operate the vehicle.

It is critical that persons with sleep apnea fully use the treatment provided by their doctor. They should not drive if they are not being treated. Being effectively treated, and complying with that treatment, offers the best hope of a commercial driver with sleep apnea to secure the ability to do his or her job safely and be fully alert.

Couriers, on-demand drivers and truckers are pressured by the evolving nature of their business. The Association for U.S. Professional Drivers helps them to stay current and keeps them connected to the products, benefits, and services that are unique to their industry.

Log in at www.auspd.org for more information about available discounts and benefits, including:

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- And more!



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