

IMPORTANT POINTS

- As much as it's important for time cards to be handed in on time, it's as important that they are properly filled-in and signed by your supervisor at work. You have in your employment kit a copy of a time card as it should be filled-in. Please refer to this example. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to ask either Jean Beauchamp or Nathalie Ferguson.
- Using your cellular telephone to call and text while at work is forbidden as it can be a hazard, unless it is an emergency. If the phone call or text you receive is an emergency, you need to obtain approval from your supervisor to call or text back.
- All incidents or accidents that happen while at work and because of the work that you are doing have to be reported to LaborTek Immediately WITHOUT EXCEPTIONS

Have a safe, warm and healthy month of March!

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Fighting Fatigue

Fatigue is the condition of being physically or mentally tired or exhausted. Extreme fatigue can lead to uncontrolled and involuntary shutdown of the brain.

Fortunately, there are ways to fight fatigue:

- Get eight hours of sleep before starting work.
- Sleep at the same time each day. If they rotate shifts, establish clockwise rotations (from day to evening to night). Clockwise rotating makes it easier to go to sleep when a worker goes to bed.
- Take all scheduled work breaks. A snack or exercise during the break will refresh them.
- When trying to sleep during the daytime, find a cool, dark, quiet location. Use earplugs, soft music, or a fan to block out noise.
- See their doctor about sleep disorders, medications for illness, and using bright light on the job or during waking hours.
- Eat a well-balanced diet beginning the "day" with high protein foods and ending with carbohydrates. Do not eat great quantities before bedtime; they may cause trouble sleeping.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and cigarettes. These substances cause sleep disturbances.
- Walking, stretching, and aerobics can help a person stay awake. Exercise will give you stamina and help you to fall asleep later.
- Work carefully and very methodically, always following proper procedures.

When you're fatigued **you will make errors in judgment**. Your mind or eyes can be off task and you can make a critical error.

Here are some things to look for in your coworkers to help identify fatigue. Everyone needs your help, because in most cases, people who are under significant fatigue can't identify it themselves. These include:

- Their job performance slows.
- Their job quality is reduced.
- They can't recall their last thought, conversation, or what they did a moment ago.
- They have trouble solving problems.
- They make errors.
- They have a near-miss accident.

- They have trouble focusing.
- The head droops.
- They can't stop yawning.

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Sleep experts all agree that a regular eight hours of sleep is good for you, but the results of a recent study suggest that the groggy feeling most of us wake up to, even after a good night's sleep, is harder shake off than we might like to think. "Sleep inertia," the period immediately after waking, finds most of us in a state of impairment comparable to drunkenness. In a study conducted by Colorado University researchers, subjects who were deprived of sleep for more than 24 hours actually performed some tests more accurately than those who had just woken up from an eight hour sleep. The study tested short-term memory, counting skills and cognition during sleep inertia. It found that impairment was most severe during the first three minutes. While the most severe effects of sleep inertia dissipated after ten minutes, in some subjects, lingering effects could be detected for up to two hours after waking.

Most of us have a morning routine that allows us ten minutes or longer to ease our way into wakefulness, but the results of this study have serious implications for people who are regularly called on to wake up and act quickly such as medical personnel, emergencies responders and professional drivers. Doctors and nurses work long hours, sometimes napping to refresh themselves, and often making important decisions that require the kind of simple math calculations the Colorado University study examined. The study did not measure the effects of a cold shower or a hot cup of coffee during the first few minutes after waking, but because any of us could find ourselves pulled from sleep to deal with an emergency, this new study has implications for all of us. Even when we have very little time to rouse ourselves from sleep, we should take as much time as we can, remember that our judgement is suspect in those first minutes of wakefulness, and double-check our *calculations before making crucial decisions*.