

## LOGGING/FORESTRY SAFETY SERIES

# OPERATING MACHINERY WHILE FATIGUED

*Photo credit: Cornelis F. de Hoop, PhD*

### Incident Summary:

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, Leo left his house at 4:00 a.m. to drive to report to work as a log truck driver at a logging site 45 minutes away. He had worked an average of 13 hours/day Monday-Friday for the past two weeks. Seasonal allergies had also left Leo congested and sleep-deprived. At 7:32 a.m., police and EMT personnel responded to an accident involving Leo's truck and an SUV. According to the police report, Leo fell asleep at the wheel and failed to stop at a traffic light. His loaded log truck hit an SUV carrying a woman and two children. The woman and one child died at the scene. The other child was life-flighted to Dallas Children's Hospital. Leo suffered a concussion, and multiple broken bones in his feet, legs and hips.

### Discussion Questions:

1. What contributed to Leo's fatigue?
2. What can a worker do to fight fatigue?
3. What are the lifelong consequences of this incident?

### Take Home Message:

Driving or operating machinery while fatigued can be deadly, for you and the people around you.



Created by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education  
11937 US Hwy 271 Tyler, TX 75708 | [www.swagcenter.org](http://www.swagcenter.org) | [agcenter@uthct.edu](mailto:agcenter@uthct.edu) | 903.877.5998

## Tips for Fighting Fatigue at Work

1. Take a brisk walk.
2. Refresh with cold water: splash your face with cold water, pour cold water over wrists or put a cool, damp cloth on your forehead.
3. Snack on nuts.
4. Avoid sugar. It may give you a temporary surge of energy, but will ultimately cause a sugar crash. It can also lead to weight gain which can contribute to fatigue.
5. Chew mint gum or packaged mints. The smell of mint can promote energy.

## Tips for Preventing Fatigue

1. Talk to your doctor about fatigue and/or trouble sleeping.
2. Drink plenty of water. Limit caffeine and energy drinks.
3. Get enough sleep.
4. Exercise to boost energy and help you sleep.
5. Maintain a healthy weight.
6. Don't skip meals.
7. Eat plenty of fruit, vegetables and whole grains.
8. Manage stress.

## Resources

[http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Fatigue\\_fighting\\_tips?open](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Fatigue_fighting_tips?open)

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/rheumatoid-arthritis-pictures/how-to-fight-fatigue-and-stop-feeling-tired.aspx>

<http://www.prevention.com/health/sleep-energy/9-energizing-tricks-fight-fatigue>

<http://www.drfranklipman.com/all-day-energy-10-fantastic-ways-to-fight-fatigue/>



*Created by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education  
11937 US Hwy 271 Tyler, TX 75708 | [www.swagcenter.org](http://www.swagcenter.org) | [agcenter@uthct.edu](mailto:agcenter@uthct.edu) | 903.877.5998*