



Holiday Fatigue Awareness

TOOLBOX TALK: Holiday Fatigue Awareness

RATTLIR Safety Series – “Strike Before It Bites”

Purpose

Fatigue increases significantly during the holiday season due to travel, schedule disruptions, weather, and personal obligations. This toolbox talk explains how holiday fatigue affects safety, how to recognize warning signs, and strategies to reduce risk—especially while driving or performing field tasks.

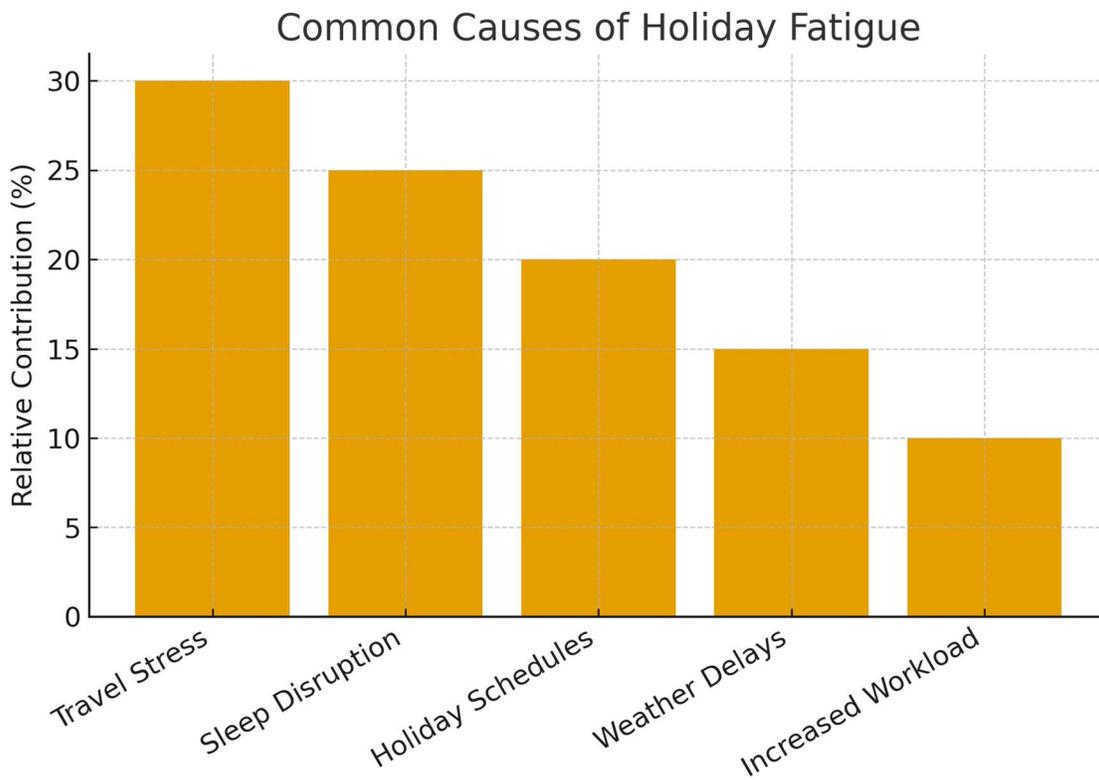


Figure 1 – Common factors contributing to holiday-related fatigue.



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Common Causes of Holiday Fatigue

- Increased travel and long-distance driving.
- Irregular sleep schedules due to events or family commitments.
- Early-morning departures and late-night returns.
- Higher stress levels from planning and responsibilities.
- Weather-related delays or extended travel times.
- Disruption of normal eating and hydration habits.

Warning Signs of Fatigue

- Yawning, nodding off, or heavy eyelids.
- Difficulty focusing or forgetting the last few miles driven.
- Drifting between lanes.
- Irritability or delayed reaction times.
- Micro-sleeps lasting 2–5 seconds.

Fatigue Prevention Strategies

- Plan travel to allow adequate rest before long drives.
- Avoid driving late at night or very early in the morning.
- Schedule breaks every 2 hours or 100 miles.
- Share driving responsibilities when possible.
- Stay hydrated and avoid heavy meals before travel.
- Limit alcohol consumption—fatigue effects are compounded.
- Maintain as normal a sleep routine as possible.

Holiday Fatigue on the Job

- Increased errors, reduced reaction time, and decreased situational awareness.
- Higher risk of slips, trips, falls, and vehicle incidents.
- Reduced ability to safely perform inspections or drone operations.
- Need for extra vigilance during fieldwork in winter conditions.

Emergency Response

- If a driver becomes fatigued, stop at a safe location and rest.
- Report inability to safely travel or work to supervision.
- If someone shows serious fatigue symptoms, remove them from safety-sensitive tasks.



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Discussion Questions

- Have recent travel or holiday events reduced your sleep?
- Are winter weather conditions adding extra stress or delays?
- Do you feel fully alert for driving or field tasks today?

RATTLIR Takeaway

Holiday fatigue is real – and dangerous. Prioritizing rest, planning ahead, and recognizing early warning signs ensures we strike before it bites, even during the busiest season of the year.