

PestSure Safety

INSURING THE FUTURE OF PEST CONTROL

Tips

A five-minute training Series for Pest Management Professionals.

The Importance of Sleep

It is not possible to store sleep. A single night's shortened sleep period may not have a negative or noticeable effect upon performance the next day. This single night's lost sleep is quite easy to make up during the next sleep period. However, cutting sleep periods short for an extended period of time such as weeks or months leads to a condition of chronic sleep deprivation and its resulting performance effects.

Studies of partial sleep deprivation show that workers can tolerate a certain degree of sleep loss without having their performance levels affected. On average, workers require 7 to 8 hours of sleep per night.

Resulting Impairments of Sleep Deprivation:

- Slowed reactions – physical reaction speed and speed of thought
- Failure to respond to stimuli, changes in the surroundings, information
- Incorrect actions either physical or mental
- Flawed logic and judgment and an inability to concentrate
- Increases in memory errors, including forgetfulness
- Decrease in vigilance
- Reduced motivation
- Increased tendency for risk-taking

Incident rates among long-haul truckers have been found to peak during periods of fatigue-related incidents involving commercial trucks found that drivers in fatigue-related accidents slept an average of 5.5 hours during their last sleep period, as compared with 8.0 hours of sleep for those without accidents. The highest rate of automobile accidents occurs in the early morning hours when the fewest number of automobiles are on the road but when most people experience fatigue and sleepiness.

Even modest amounts of daily sleep loss - of as little as 1 hour per night – increase a worker's tendency to fall asleep. Most workers can resist this tendency under normal circumstances. However, when physical activity is minimal and the body's circadian rhythm is at its lowest point of alertness, the likelihood of an attention lapse, a micro sleep, or complete sleep is much more likely. Heavy meals, warm rooms, and long periods of driving reveal the presence of sleepiness (but do not cause it).

Quality of sleep is as important as quantity. Sleep may be disrupted by the use of prescription drugs, stimulants such as caffeine, and sleep related illnesses such as sleep apnea. In addition, we need to be aware of other potential sleep disrupters such as the arrival of new baby, part-time work at another job, or stress causing situations such as financial or relationship problems.

Strive toward 7 to 8 hours of uninterrupted quality sleep each night. By combating fatigue, you have a much better chance of arriving home safely at the end of each work day.

