

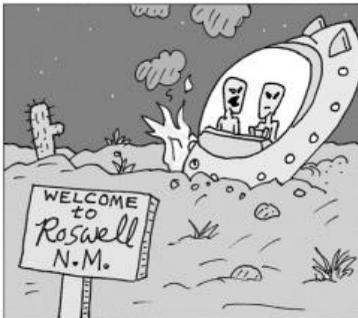
## news & notes

### DRIVERS AND STRESS

Unmanaged stress can be hazardous to health. Stress can lead not only to physical discomfort (headaches, indigestion, aches and pains), but over time, it can contribute to serious health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes.

To help manage job-related stress:

- **Count to 10** when stressed or angry and give yourself time to think more clearly before acting.
- **Take deep breaths** to release tension.
- **Listen to music.**
- **Talk about problems** with family and friends.
- **Maintain a sense of humor.**
- **Exercise** to relieve tension.
- **Take time to relax** every day and do something you really enjoy.



"I'm fine, you said!  
I'm not tired, you said!"



*March 2013*

## Driver wellness

### *Review the basics*

Wellness is an important issue for drivers—whether you drive for a living or just for commuting and living—because a significant number of accidents are health related, which makes wellness an important safety factor. Being healthy helps you function better on and off the job. Wellness keeps you on the job earning a paycheck. Preventing illness and disease allows you to live a longer, happier life.

#### Fatigue

Fatigue on the road increases the risk that drivers will make a mistake and have an accident. Fatigue affects reflexes, judgment, concentration, alertness, and mood—all faculties needed to drive safely. You can manage fatigue by:

- Getting enough sleep
- Eating well-balanced meals
- Keeping cab environment comfortable
- Taking periodic rest breaks
- Pulling over and taking a quick nap if feeling very tired

#### Ergonomics

Ergonomics is about performing the job in such a way as to prevent injuries to the back and other parts of the body. Sitting and driving for long hours, lifting heavy loads, and other aspects of a driver's job put a lot of stress and strain on a driver's body. You can reduce the risk of ergonomically related injuries by:

- Being careful getting in and out of vehicle to avoid strains
- Maintaining a good driving posture
- Adjusting the seat for maximum comfort
- Shifting position periodically to relieve muscle tension
- Walking around and stretching on driving breaks
- Lifting and carrying heavy objects properly

#### Violence

Drivers may be vulnerable to crime and violence on the road, and that could lead to injuries. To prevent problems:

- Lock your vehicle when you're in it and when you leave it.
- Be careful in parking lots, rest stops, and on the street.
- Carry a cell phone and report suspicious activity or individuals.
- Avoid disputes with other drivers that could lead to fights.
- Report any crime or violence to police right away.

## news & notes

### DOT AND MARIJUANA

In light of changes in some state laws regarding recreational use of marijuana, the federal Department of Transportation (DOT) has issued a clarification through its Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance.

"We want to make it perfectly clear that the state initiatives will have no bearing on the Department of Transportation's regulated drug-testing program," the notice stated. As a result, medical review officers (MROs) will not verify a drug test as negative based on learning that an employee used recreational marijuana in states that have passed such laws.

The notice added, "We also firmly reiterate that an MRO will not verify a drug test negative based upon information that a physician recommended that the employee use medical marijuana in states that have passed such laws."

According to the DOT, "It remains unacceptable for any safety-sensitive employee subject to drug testing under the DOT's drug testing regulations to use marijuana."



## Don't get stoned!

### *How to avoid kidney stones*

March is **National Kidney Month**, so it's an appropriate time to learn that kidney stones are a hard mass formed from waste substances in the urine. They usually pass on their own, but if they don't, you will need medical treatment, such as shock waves to break up the stone or tunnel surgery to remove it. The NKUDIC reports that you are more likely to get kidney stones if you are:

- Caucasian
- Male
- Age 40 or older
- Someone who's already had a stone

Kidney stone symptoms include:

- Extreme, unrelenting pain in back or side
- Bloody urine
- Fever and chills
- Vomiting
- Smelly or cloudy urine
- A burning feeling during urination

Take these steps to avoid kidney stones:

- **Drink lots of water**, which helps flush stones away.
- **Do not drink lots of grapefruit juice or dark colas**, which can increase the risk for stones.
- **Limit sodium in your diet**, which can cause a build-up of calcium.

## Pallet precautions

### *Take these steps to work safely*

The primary method of moving goods in manufacturing, warehouses, and distribution centers involves the use of pallets. Because pallets are subjected to a rough-and-tumble life, they don't always survive long. That's why so many new ones are made each year. Take these precautions to prevent pallet accidents:

- Choose the pallet designed for the job.
- Never use a pallet as a man lift to perform overhead work, or as scaffolding, or as personnel cages to carry people up and down the side of a building.
- During the handling of materials:
  - Make sure the configuration of the load fits the pallet.
  - Stabilize the load before moving it. Steel or plastic strapping may be required.
  - Keep the forks of the forklift or pallet jack horizontal and enter the pallet carefully.
  - Keep the unit load low when in motion.
  - Lower the pallet gently. Don't drop it.
- Don't slide pallets, empty or loaded, along the floor.
- Keep racking at a safe height. Watch that the stack doesn't reach to sprinkler heads, ventilation ducts, and heat sources.
- Keep racked pallets away from walkways.
- Store unused pallets outside, away from buildings, to avoid a fire hazard. Lay them flat, not on their ends, and never stacked on ends.
- Set aside damaged pallets in a designated area for repair or disposal.