

## FACTS ABOUT DROWSY DRIVING

# 17.6%

of U.S. fatal crashes involved a drowsy driver, according to AAA Foundation estimates for 2017-2021. [1]

# 29,834

people were estimated to have died in those crashes over that five-year period. [1]

# 1 IN 5

drivers reported driving drowsy in the previous 30 days in AAA Foundation's 2025 survey. [2]

The true toll is difficult to measure. Drowsiness often goes unrecognized after a crash, so reported figures underestimate the problem. [3]

[1] AAA Foundation: Fatal Crashes, 2017-2021 (2024).

[2] AAA Foundation: 2025 Traffic Safety Culture Index.

[3] NHTSA: Drowsy Driving.

## ABOUT RUSS BURRIS



Award-Winning,  
Nationally Recognized  
Drowsy Driving &  
Injury Prevention Speaker

**Founder, REST**

Recognize Exhaustion  
for Safer Travel

On June 3, 1990, Russ Burris fell asleep at the wheel just **90 seconds from home**. The crash left him paralyzed from the chest down and inspired a lifelong mission of **education, prevention, and hope**.

Since 1992, Russ has brought his message to thousands of people at schools, businesses, organizations, and conferences nationwide.

A longtime **ThinkFirst VIP - Voice for Injury Prevention**, Russ was named **2019 National VIP of the Year**. His story has appeared in national media, including *The Washington Post*, *Parade*, *Huffington Post* and *TODAY*, and in the award-winning film *Almost Home*.

In **2026, Russ founded REST**, bringing more than three decades of experience to drowsy-driving and fatigue-awareness education. His message is **personal, practical, and difficult to forget**: recognize exhaustion and make safer choices before tragedy occurs.

*Recognize the signs. Make the safe choice.  
Arrive alive.*

**BRING REST TO YOUR SCHOOL,  
BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION**

**RESTforSafety.com**

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# STAY ALERT. STAY ALIVE.

**DROWSY DRIVING  
CAN CHANGE A LIFE  
IN AN INSTANT.**

**RECOGNIZE THE WARNING SIGNS.  
REST BEFORE YOU DRIVE.  
ARRIVE ALIVE.**

## HOW FATIGUE IMPAIRS DRIVING

- Slower reactions to hazards
- Poor judgment and reduced attention
- Difficulty staying in your lane
- Microsleeps: brief, involuntary sleep episodes

## FATIGUE & ALCOHOL: THE COMPARISON

| TIME AWAKE | SIMILAR IMPAIRMENT |
|------------|--------------------|
| 17 hours   | 0.05% BAC          |
| 24 hours   | 0.10% BAC          |

Approximate impairment comparisons, not actual alcohol levels or safe-driving limits. BAC means blood alcohol concentration. [1]

## LESS SLEEP. GREATER CRASH RISK.

| SLEEP IN PAST 24 HOURS | CRASH RATE* |
|------------------------|-------------|
| 6 to less than 7 hours | 1.3 times   |
| 5 to less than 6 hours | 1.9 times   |
| 4 to less than 5 hours | 4.3 times   |
| Less than 4 hours      | 11.5 times  |

\*Estimated relative to drivers who slept 7+ hours. AAA Foundation study, 2016. [2]

[1] [CDC/NIOSH: Driver Fatigue on the Job.](#)

[2] [AAA Foundation: Acute Sleep Deprivation \(2016\).](#)

## RECOGNIZE THE WARNING SIGNS

- Heavy eyelids or trouble focusing
- Repeated yawning or difficulty keeping your head up
- Wandering thoughts or irritability
- Missing signs, exits, or turns
- Not remembering the last few miles
- Drifting from your lane or hitting rumble strips

NOTICE A WARNING SIGN?  
FIND A SAFE PLACE TO STOP.

## WHO IS AT GREATER RISK?

- Anyone with too little or poor-quality sleep
- Teens and young adults
- Night-shift workers and people working long hours
- Commercial drivers and people on long, monotonous trips
- People with untreated sleep disorders or sedating medications

## HIGH-RISK TIMES

Midnight-6 a.m. and late afternoon.

[NHTSA: Drowsy Driving.](#)

[CDC/NIOSH: Driver Fatigue on the Job.](#)

## BEFORE YOU DRIVE

- **Start rested.** Most adults need 7-9 hours of sleep each day. Teens need more.
- **Plan breaks every two hours or 100 miles.** Stop sooner if sleepy.
- **Share the drive** with a rested driver.
- **Avoid alcohol.** It worsens impairment when combined with sleepiness.
- **Check medication labels** for drowsiness warnings.

## IF YOU BECOME DROWSY

- 1 STOP SAFELY**  
Pull into a designated rest area or another safe place away from traffic.
- 2 REST OR CHANGE PLANS**  
Switch to a rested driver, arrange a ride, or stop for the night.
- 3 SHORT-TERM HELP ONLY**  
Coffee plus a 20-minute nap may briefly help. If still sleepy, do not drive.

## MYTH vs. REALITY

**MYTH:** "Coffee will keep me safe."

**REALITY:** Caffeine may briefly improve alertness. It cannot replace sleep.

**MYTH:** "An open window or loud music will keep me awake."

**REALITY:** These do not prevent drowsy driving.

**MYTH:** "I'm almost home - I can make it."

**REALITY:** A short distance does not make a drowsy drive safe.

Russ crashed just **90 seconds** from home.

[NHTSA: Drowsy Driving.](#) [CDC/NIOSH: Driver Fatigue.](#)  
[California Office of Traffic Safety: Drowsy Driving.](#)