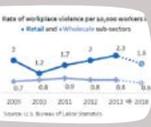




**SLEEP DEFICIENCY (FATIGUE), PAIN, & LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY IN RETAIL WORK ..... 1**



**WRT AT A GLANCE PROGRAM PERFORMANCE ONE-PAGER ..... 1**



**WORKER FATIGUE FIVE FACTS TO SAVE YOUR LIFE..... 2**

*Photos Thinkstock*

# NORA Sector Council Bulletin Wholesale & Retail Trade

## ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE FOR A SAFE FUTURE

# Sleep Deficiency (Fatigue), Pain, and Loss of Productivity in Retail Work

A study conducted almost 10 years ago revealed that fatigue is more prevalent than most health providers realized. A national survey indicated that nearly 40% of the respondents reported that they had experienced fatigue in the previous 2 weeks that was severe enough to disable them. Fatigue, the researchers noted, was associated with a loss of productive work time and a loss in the quality of life.<sup>1</sup>

“Shift work that causes excessive work fatigue is stressful not only physically but also mentally and emotionally.”<sup>1</sup>

In the retail industry, work fatigue is caused by many factors.<sup>2</sup> The most common is working extended or irregular shifts that are longer than 8 hours, or any work hours that limit the opportunity to get adequate sleep between shifts. For example, an employee working a late night shift and then working an early morning shift the following day would likely experience work fatigue. According to a Member Insurance Resource, “reports of fatigue are higher among shift-workers than among day-workers and highest during night work.”<sup>2</sup>

“Sleep deficiency was associated with an increase in pain and declines in productivity.”

A more recent study supported by NIOSH was conducted by a noted public health research team at Harvard [2012].<sup>3</sup> They found that sleep deficiency was associated with an increase in pain, reduced productivity, and reduced alertness. Sleep deficiency is a new term for a short sleep duration, lack of sleep, or unmet sleep need that results in poor health, declines in work performance, and declines in overall well-being.

Fatigue impairs work ability by increasing the time it takes to accomplish tasks and impairing workers’ concentration. Workers with fatigue reported more physical health problems, body pain, and role limitations, as well as poorer general health, vitality, and social functioning than workers without fatigue.

In terms of prevention, the topic of sleep must be addressed as a vital part of a company’s safety and health program, particularly for employees who work rotating shifts, evening shifts, night shifts, or long work hours. Employees need to be aware of the effects of sleep deficiencies for dealing with common workplace hazards.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Buxton OM et al. [2012]. Relationship of sleep deficiency to perceived pain and functional limitations in hospital patient care workers. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine/American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 54(7):851.

<sup>1</sup> Ricci JA et al. [2007]. Fatigue in the U.S. workforce: prevalence and implications for lost productive work time. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 49(1):1–10.

<sup>2</sup> Member Insurance [2014]. The tool box: loss control resource for members. *Workplace Fatigue*, July.

## **NEW** WRT at a Glance

NIOSH recently published a Program Performance One-Pager (PPOP) for its Wholesale and Retail Trade Program (NIOSH 2016-157). The PPOP describes the program’s activities and priorities and its relevance to the industry. A library of NIOSH PPOPs is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/ppop/default.html>.



Photo Thinkstock

## Fatigue

### Five Facts to Save Your Life

Fatigue is the body's signal that sleep or a rest period is needed.

- » Fatigue is physical or mental exhaustion that can be caused by stress; medication; overwork; extreme heat; or underlying medical conditions such as mental and physical illness or disease.
- » The body is designed for sleeping 7–8 hours during the nighttime. Working at night, very early in the morning, at irregular times, and over long shifts can lead to shorter sleep time and poorer-quality sleep, which can lead to fatigue.
- » Fatigue makes workers feel weary or unmotivated, reduces physical ability, reduces productivity, and increases risk for worker errors and injuries.
- » Long work hours may increase the risk of injuries and accidents and can contribute to poor health and worker fatigue.
- » Employers and workers need to view sleep as an important safety requirement, like water, food, and the supplies needed to carry out work. Both employers and workers need to make getting enough good quality sleep each day a priority.<sup>4</sup>

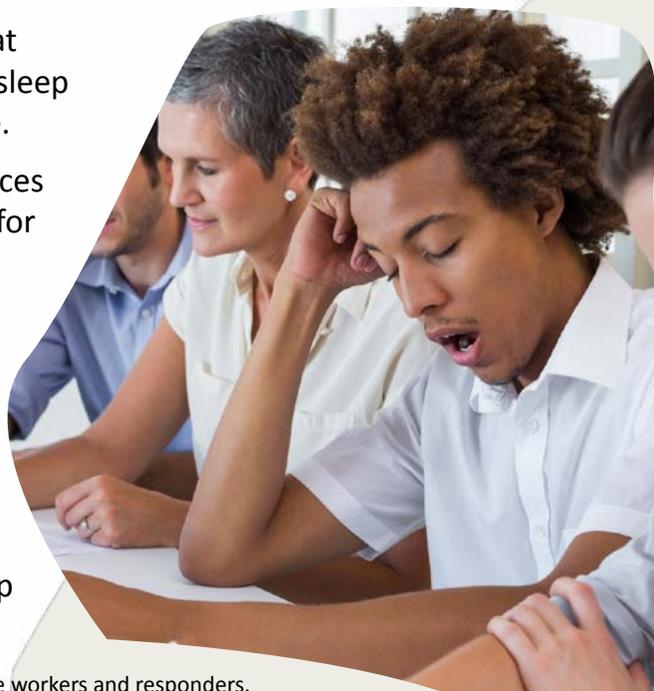


Photo Thinkstock

<sup>4</sup> NIOSH-OSHA [2015]. Fact sheet: preventing worker fatigue among Ebola healthcare workers and responders. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and Occupational Safety and Health Administration, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/ebola/pdfs/preventingworkerfatigueamongebolahcw122914.pdf>.

# NEW

## Web Page for Safety of Young Retail Workers

NIOSH has launched a new web page for [young retail workers](#). This resource provides an overview of retail business and safety hazards. It describes the top hazards and best practices to prevent injury or illness. The topics include (1) How equipment, tools, and supplies can hurt you; (2) Doing too much (overworking); (3) Slips, trips, and falls; (4) Transportation and motor vehicles; (5) Violence; and (6) Basic safety knowledge. In its information on how to keep safe and healthy at work, the web page outlines eight things employees should know about working safely, employee rights, and the employer's role.

To find previous editions, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/wrt/bulletins.html>.

Co-Assf. Coord.: Donna Pfirman  
[dpfirman@cdc.gov](mailto:dpfirman@cdc.gov)  
Coordinator: Vern Anderson  
[vanderson@cdc.gov](mailto:vanderson@cdc.gov)  
Copy Editor: Seleen Collins  
1090 Tusculum Ave (MS C10)  
Cincinnati, OH 45226

To receive NIOSH documents or for more information about occupational safety and health topics, contact NIOSH at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636). TTY: 1-888-232-6348  
CDC INFO: [www.cdc.gov/info](http://www.cdc.gov/info) or visit NIOSH website at [www.cdc.gov/niosh](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh)  
For a monthly update on news at NIOSH, subscribe to NIOSH eNews by visiting [www.cdc.gov/niosh/eNews](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/eNews)

