

Staying safe on the roads: work-related driving

Driving is often an important part of our working lives.

Whether driving to client meetings, driving a vehicle such as a truck or forklift, or simply driving to and from work, it's important to always keep safety in mind. This fact sheet provides some tips about staying safe when you drive.

How to stay safe:

- Avoid driving if you're tired or under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Though you may feel okay, the alcohol or other drugs might still be in your system, even the next day.
- Don't accept a ride with someone you suspect has recently drunk alcohol or used drugs.
- If you're taking prescription or over-the-counter medication, speak to your doctor or pharmacist about whether it could affect your driving.
- Adjust your driving to the weather conditions, such as by slowing down when it's raining or wet.
- Never answer a mobile phone or try to read or send text messages while driving.
- Use personal or pub breathalysers as a general guide only, not for calculating if you can drive safely or not.

Alcohol and other drugs

- Alcohol and other drugs can affect your attention span, reaction time and coordination.
- Some medications can affect your ability to drive, so check with your doctor or pharmacist to see if you may be affected.
- Taking more than one drug at a time is dangerous as it is difficult to predict exactly how they may interact with each other and how long the effects will last.
- Alcohol and other drugs can continue to affect you the following day. Fatigue, hangovers and 'coming down' can also impair your driving ability.
- If you intend to use alcohol or other drugs, the safest option is not to drive.

Almost one in four drivers and motorcyclists killed in the last five years had a blood alcohol concentration greater than 0.05¹.

If you intend to use alcohol or other drugs and need to travel, plan ahead:

- Organise a designated driver.
- Arrange for someone to pick you up.
- Use public transport or a taxi.
- Stay overnight.

Avoid driving if you:

- Feel dizzy or light-headed
- Feel nauseous or unwell
- Are tired. If you haven't slept for 17 hours your driving ability will be similar to having a blood alcohol concentration of up to 0.05².
- Have recently used alcohol or other drugs, as you may still be experiencing the effects.

Adapted from the DrugInfo fact sheet "Staying safe on the roads: tips for young people" (2010, druginfo.adf.org.au/factsheets/staying-safe-on-the-roads-tips-for-young-people-web-fact-sheet).

¹ Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, Rural Ambulance Victoria & Metropolitan Ambulance Service (no date) *Too tired to drive? Driver fatigue checklist*, retrieved from

http://www.racv.com.au/wps/wcm/connect/a0cdd6004da9aaa0a6c3fe54a1b45993/Driver_Fatigue_Brochure.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

² Transport Accident Commission, Drink driving statistics, retrieved from <http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety/statistics/summaries/drink-driving-statistics>

Factsheet

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**ALCOHOL AND DRUGS
IN THE WORKPLACE**

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