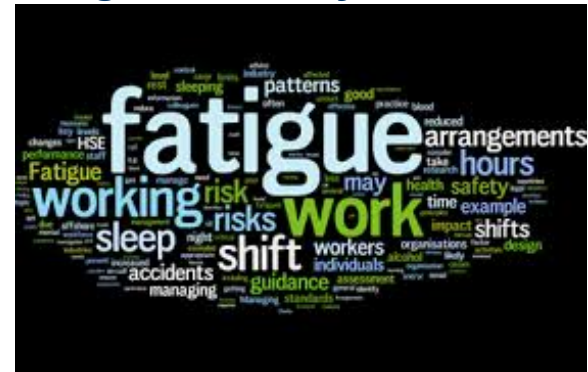


## Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



## Long Work Hours and Worker Fatigue Safety Message

Long work hours and irregular work shifts are common in our society. Many American workers spend over 40 hours a week at work and almost 15 million work full time on evening, night, rotating or other irregular shifts. Work schedules like these may cause worker fatigue.

Shift workers may be scheduled to work days, evenings, nights and/or on a rotating or on-call basis. They may work extended shifts (more than 8 hours long), rotating or irregular shifts, or consecutive shifts resulting in more than the typical 40-hour work week. Long work hours may increase the risk of injuries and accidents and can contribute to poor health and worker fatigue. Studies show that long work hours can result in increased levels of stress, poor eating habits, lack of physical activity and illness. It is important to recognize the symptoms of worker fatigue and its potential impact on each worker's safety and health and on the safety of co-workers.

**Decreased alertness from worker fatigue has been a factor in industrial disasters such as the 2005 Texas City BP oil refinery explosion, the 2009 Colgan Air Crash, the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger and the nuclear accidents at Chernobyl and Three Mile Island.**