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Sleep Deprived? Don't Get Behind the Wheel.



When it comes to driving, we are mindful of the obvious risks: speed and alcohol. But, according to a [National Sleep Foundation poll](#), adults between 18 and 29 are much more likely to drive drowsy. Fatigue can have implications for you and your chapter, affecting not only academic performance but also risk and liability:

- [Studies](#) indicate that as sleep quality and quantity decrease, academic performance worsens. Sleep deprivation impairs your ability to recognize and correct errors, such as those inherent in driving.
- The Connecticut Supreme Court allowed a lawsuit to proceed against a fraternity in an incident of fatigued driving. The chapter scheduled an out-of-town party and arranged for members to drive. However, one driver was sleep-deprived, allegedly as a result of "Hell Week." The driver crashed, killing himself, 3 others and injuring 5. The lawsuit was settled.
- A wrongful death suit was filed by the mother of an East Carolina University sorority pledge as a result of fatigued driving. The suit alleges that a designated driver was driving pledges during "Hell Week." The driver, also a pledge, was sleep-deprived, ran off the road, and hit a tree, killing 2 and wounding a third. The driver was criminally charged with "death by motor vehicle," and the sorority and individual members have been sued.
- Last April, a 20-year-old nursing student in Pennsylvania was charged with involuntary manslaughter and reckless endangerment after fatigued driving allegedly led to a death. The student admitted to only 3 hours of sleep in the 36-hours leading to the crash.

Funeral homes and courtrooms are no place for chapter meetings. So, get some sleep! Your grades and your safety depend on it.

Considerations Regarding Driving and Fatigue

- What are your rules – national, insurance, and university?
- Are your members driving fatigued as a result of chapter activities?
- Do you have a good transportation plan in place?
- Are alternate source of transportation available (campus, charter, taxi, etc.)?