

FMCSA creates new sleep apnea guideline

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The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has released a new sleep apnea guideline for the nation's truck drivers.

Sleep apnea is a sleep disorder that causes the individual to experience brief breathing interruptions while asleep. It is one of the most common trucker health problems, affecting approximately 28 percent of all CDL drivers and other industry members. The disorder is highly treatable, but can lead to other serious health issues if left undiagnosed, according to the U.S. motor carrier authority.

The new FMCSA recommendations state that drivers who have a body mass index of 35 or higher should be given a conditional certification pending sleep study evaluation. Being overweight, having a large neck size, smoking and alcohol use, and being over the age of 40 are the highest risk factors for sleep apnea.

Research has shown that sleep apnea puts drivers at an increased risk of crashing their vehicle. Untreated drivers did worse on performance tests than healthy subjects whose blood alcohol concentration levels were above the legal limit for driving a commercial motor vehicle, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Aeroflow Industrial Clinics is a company that works closely with the trucking industry, offering screening processes, diagnostic testing, treatment and other compliance monitoring for sleep disorders. The clinics strive to provide a time and cost-effective solution for sleep apnea and have helped thousands of drivers stay within FMCSA regulations.