

## **Sleeping and Driving –( Highway Hypnosis )- Spring Time**

Driving a snowmobile in the spring can be dangerous if you're sleeping. Hunters and outdoor folks stay up long hours to enjoy the sun, the warm weather and to take advantage of the season and what it has to offer. They may be hunting or simply enjoying the great outdoors. After being awake for a length of time, people tend to get tired and sleepy. With the sun shining 24 hours a day, warm weather, birds, spectacular scenery, flies buzzing about, fishing, abundant animals and outdoor fun, it is difficult to sleep regular hours. Hunting young seals can keep hunters up for hours. Thinking and hoping they will get their last seal of the day, before they know it, one day leads into another. Soon the hunter realizes they had been up for 2 or 3 days trying to get their "last one" before they call it "a day". Driving back to the camp may be very difficult for the driver because the sound of the engine contributes to their tiredness, already enhanced by lack of sleep. The humming of an engine sounds like music when you are extremely tired. The driver may fall asleep and endanger the other people on the trip. A driver might accidentally drive into an ice crack, deep snow, deteriorated seal holes, deep water, shoreline tidal cracks, or rough spots because they are unaware of the conditions.

This writer has fallen asleep and even dreamt while driving through dangerous areas. Sometimes the driver will wake up suddenly when the sled line quickly tightens or when the sled gets stuck unnecessarily. A splash of water directed from the snowmobile skis may wake you up very quickly when you feel the ice cold water in your face. The sun shines all the time contributing to the difficulty of driving safely along while you are tired from lack of sleep. Because of the dangers that continuously challenge a tired driver, it is recommended to stop and rest.

People have been known to sleep fully clothed when they get too tired to tuck in properly. A tired person may just lay down on the sled and fall asleep. Some people have quick snoozes between breaks and in between rides to another hunting area. Others have shelter boxes on their sleds for sleeping when they get tired. You may see individuals sleeping on the dry ground as you approach a camp. A quick snooze is better than staying up too long.

One guy was very tired and sleepy but kept on traveling. He was advised not to travel but he did anyway. He woke up with his snowmobile running and stuck in one same spot. He had his machine running in the same spot for over an hour, while catching up on his sleep. He was safe but he used over an hours worth of gasoline unnecessarily. Gasoline is very expensive in the North along with snowmobile parts. Some drive belts are well over one hundred dollars each.

A person can only stay up for so long before having to sleep to rest their body. It is recommended that you travel well rested and sharp enough to avoid dangers of the spring season.

Travel safely in the spring, please don't sleep and drive!

**Elijah Tigullaraq**  
**QSO**  
**May 2010**