

Overworked Truck Drivers

Businesses of all stripes are trying to boost productivity without spending money on more resources. This is especially true in the trucking industry. Consequently, truck drivers are being pressured to deliver more loads in less time than ever before.

Not surprisingly, the result is a lot of overworked truck drivers. And statistics have shown that the higher the level of driver fatigue, the greater the chances are of a trucking accident. Because of their size and weight, tractor-trailers generally cause more property damage and injuries than passenger cars when they are involved in motor vehicle collisions.

To combat this problem, federal trucking industry regulators have established restrictions on the length of time that truck drivers can be behind the wheel. In 2008, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration approved [a series of provisions](#) which mandated rest periods for truck drivers. These laws apply to interstate truckers as well as those operating on Illinois highways, freeways, and streets. Here are some of the main trucking regulations:

- *In any seven-day period, the maximum number of driving hours for an 18-wheeler operator is **60**. An exception can be made if the driver rests for at least **34** straight hours during those seven days.*
- *On any day, the maximum number of driving hours for an 18-wheeler operator is **11**.*
- *On any day, the minimum number of consecutive rest hours for an 18-wheeler operator is **10**.*
- *All truck drivers must maintain an updated logbook listing the exact hours they drove and rested each day.*

However, some truck drivers exceed these federally-mandated driving hours and/or falsify their logbooks to give the impression that they are staying within the law. Since truckers are often paid by the mile, they may be tempted to drive as many miles as possible without getting the proper rest. In addition, because trucking companies are pressured by deadlines and road schedules, they may overtly or implicitly urge their drivers to reach their destinations regardless of how long they have to remain behind the wheel.

But here's the bottom line: **if a trucker disobeys these driving regulations and causes a traffic accident, then both the semi driver and his or her employer are guilty of negligence.** Not only do they expose themselves to criminal charges, but those who are injured (or killed) have solid grounds for personal injury lawsuits (or wrongful death lawsuits). This is also true if a driver is discovered to have altered or falsified his or her driving logbook.

But in order to prove this trucking negligence to a court, accident victims will need a trucking attorney who has the experience and knowledge to battle for every dollar to which they are entitled. So if you or a loved one are injured or killed in a trucking accident, don't try to fight the trucking companies by yourself. Contact a qualified trucking accident lawyer as soon as possible.