

Province launches campaign against drowsy driving

Sleeping at the wheel is the 3rd highest cause for accidents in Quebec

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Quebec's automobile insurance board is launching an ad campaign to prompt drowsy drivers to rest before getting behind the wheel.

The SAAQ spent nearly a million dollars on a television and radio awareness campaign that will begin airing on June 9 and run until mid-August. It will also post signs along roads to mobilize drivers.

The board says people have a tendency to drive for longer periods of time in the summer and fatigue often arises.

Since 2000, the province targeted commercial drivers, but this campaign will focus on everyone.

Fatigue is the third lead cause of deaths on Quebec roads every year, after drunk driving and speeding.

According to the SAAQ, an average of 116 people die while driving each year due to fatigue -- nearly 10-thousand more are injured.

"You shouldn't believe that it's enough to turn up the radio, or to open the window or take a sip of coffee. That doesn't work," said Johanne St-Cyr, vice-president for road safety at the SAAQ.

"The best way to overcome fatigue is to rest. While you're on the road, the best thing to do when you feel those symptoms, you have to find a safe place and rest for ten to fifteen minutes."

St-Cyr also suggest that people park every two hours and step out of the car for a short walk.